DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, California 94244-2090
https://wcb.ca.gov
(916) 445-8448
Gavin Newsom, Governor
NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY

Final Meeting Agenda

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

November 19, 2026, 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. Please note: *WCB offers a video link but cannot guarantee remote access. Please attend in person if you believe your participation is essential.*

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Webinar ID: 870 9449 8306
International numbers available: https://wildlife-ca-gov.zoom.us/u/kbLC9ITAl3

Notice: We no longer require Speaker Cards. If you wish to comment on an agenda item, you will be provided with the opportunity to do so during the meeting. In person speakers will be asked to line up at the podium during the specified item. Similarly, on-line speakers will be asked to raise hands to enter the queue.

The Board will break for a 30-minute lunch at approximately 12pm.

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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 Office at EEO@wildlife.ca.gov. Please make any such requests at the earliest possible time to help ensure that accommodations can be in place at the time of the meeting. 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
- Damon Nagami, Chair, Public Member
- Tina Thomas, Vice Chair, Public Member
- Karyn Gear, Public Member
- Meghan Hertel, Member
  Director, Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Fran Pavley, Public Member
- Michele Perrault, Member
  Legislative Director, Department of Finance
- Eric Sklar, Member
  President, Fish and Game Commission

Joint Legislative Advisory Committee
- Senator Catherine Blakespear
- Senator John Laird
- Senator Henry Stern
- Assemblymember Steve Bennett
- Assemblymember Diane Papan
- Assemblymember Rick Zbur

Executive Director
- Jennifer M. Norris, PhD

2. Approval of Agenda

3. Board Member Updates and Report

4. Executive Director's Reports

5. Funding Status – Informational

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

GENERAL FUND (0001)	**$7,293,128.00**
November 2026 Board Meeting Allocation:	(7,293,128.00)
Total Project Development:	(0.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	**$0.00**
HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND (0262)	**$59,310,154.90**
November 2026 Board Meeting Allocation:	(1,560,000.00)
Total Project Development:	(16,595,733.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	**$41,154,421.90**
WATER SECURITY, CLEAN DRINKING WATER, COASTAL AND BEACH PROTECTION FUND OF 2002 (Proposition 50) (6031)	**$1,829,000.00**
November 2026 Board Meeting Allocation:	(0.00)
Total Project Development:	(0.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	**$1,829,000.00**
SAFE DRINKING WATER, WATER QUALITY AND SUPPLY, FLOOD CONTROL, RIVER AND COASTAL PROTECTION FUND OF 2006 (Proposition 84) (6051)	**$3,532,128.00**
November 2026 Board Meeting Allocation:	(0.00)
Total Project Development:	(29,060.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	**$3,503,068.00**
WATER QUALITY, SUPPLY, AND INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT FUND (Proposition 1) (6083)	**$21,955,647.00**
November 2026 Board Meeting Allocation:	(5,803,000.00)
Total Project Development:	(1,600,000.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	**$14,552,647.00**

THE CALIFORNIA DROUGHT, WATER, PARKS, CLIMATE, COASTAL PROTECTION, AND OUTDOOR ACCESS FOR ALL ACT OF 2018 (Proposition 68) (6088)	**$26,812,510.49**
November 2026 Board Meeting Allocation:	(4,919,132.00)
Total Project Development:	(5,019,999.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	**$16,873,379.49**
SAFE DRINKING WATER, WILDFIRE PREVENTION, DROUGHT PREPAREDNESS, AND CLEAN AIR BOND ACT OF 2024 (Proposition 4) (6093)	**$432,745,261.00**
November 2026 Board Meeting Allocation:	(80,133,468.00)
Total Project Development (Competitive):	(97,082,196.00)
Total Project Development (Directed Projects):	(121,225,000.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	**$139,304,597.00**
SAFE DRINKING WATER, WILDFIRE PREVENTION, DROUGHT PREPAREDNESS, AND CLEAN AIR BOND ACT OF 2024 (Proposition 4) (6093) DIRECTED INTERAGENCY FUNDING TRANSFERS	**$102,460,000.00**
November 2026 Board Meeting Allocation:	(20,000,000.00)
Total Project Development:	(82,460,000.00)
Projected Unallocated Balance:	**$0.00**
TOTAL – ALL FUNDS	**$655,937,829.39**
Grand Total – November 2026 Board Meeting Allocation:	(119,708,728.00)
Grand Total - Project Development:	(319,011,988.00)
Grand Total Projected Unallocated Balance:	**$217,217,113.39**

Consent Items

Items 6-19 are part of the Consent Calendar

6. Recovery of Funds, Thursday, November 19, 2026

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	$5,653.40
Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund	$94.99
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006	$0.00
Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014	$6,220.86
The California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018	$631,100.30
Total Recoveries for All Funds	***$643,069.55***

Table 2 - General Fund

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Eel River Wildlife Area, Expansion 6 (Pedrazzini)	$45,000.00	$41,538.85	$3,461.15
Eel River Wildlife Area, Expansion 7 (Hansen)	$30,000.00	$27,807.75	$2,192.25
Total Recoveries to General Fund			***$5,653.40***

Table 3 - Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Eel River Wildlife Area, Expansion 6 (Pedrazzini)	$680,000.00	$680,000.00	$0.00
Eel River Wildlife Area, Expansion 7 (Hansen)	$420,000.00	$420,000.00	$0.00
Wildlife Resilience Metrics for Sierra Nevada Forests	$334,800.00	$334,705.01	$94.99
Total Recoveries to Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund			***$94.99***

Table 4- Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Quail Ridge UC Davis Natural Reserve System, Implementation	$213,484.00	$213,484.00	$0.00
Quail Ridge UC Davis Natural Reserve System, Implementation, Augmentation	$74,104.00	$74,104.00	$0.00
Total Recoveries to Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Fund of 2006			***$0.00***

Table 5 - Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Alliance Redwoods Water Conservation	$1,526,416.00	$1,526,414.75	$1.25
Hallwood Side Channel and Floodplain Restoration, Phases III and IV	$1,985,000.00	$1,985,000.00	$0.00
Martin Slough Flow Enhancement Planning	$589,413.00	$588,303.36	$1,109.64
Pena Creek Flow Enhancement Prioritization	$523,460.00	$518,461.00	$4,999.00
Putah-Cache Watershed Arundo Eradication Program, Phase I	$2,221,858.00	$2,221,857.91	$0.09
Reducing Limiting Factors in the San Lorenzo River Lagoon	$2,215,000.00	$2,215,000.00	$0.00
Stream Flow Enhancement Plan for the Arroyo Seco	$427,488.00	$427,377.12	$110.88
Total Recoveries to Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014			***$6,220.86***

Table 6 - The California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018

Project Name	Allocated	Expended	Balance
Boyd Desert Research Center Safety and Efficiency Improvements	$133,863.00	$106,606.74	$27,256.26
Camp-Pendola Forest Restoration	$1,381,000.00	$1,343,498.77	$37,501.23
Childs Meadow Restoration	$1,164,055.00	$1,164,055.00	$0.00
Donner Lake Lagoon Access Improvement	$372,662.00	$298,203.02	$74,458.98
Quail Ridge UC Davis Natural Reserve System, Implementation	$10,616.00	$10,616.00	$0.00
Truckee River Wildlife Area, Boca Unit Restoration	$1,190,000.00	$698,116.17	$491,883.83
Turtle Bay Boat Ramp Improvements, Planning	$311,000.00	$311,000.00	$0.00
Total Recoveries to The California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018			***$631,100.30***

7. Sheepy Ridge Wildlife Area — Transaction

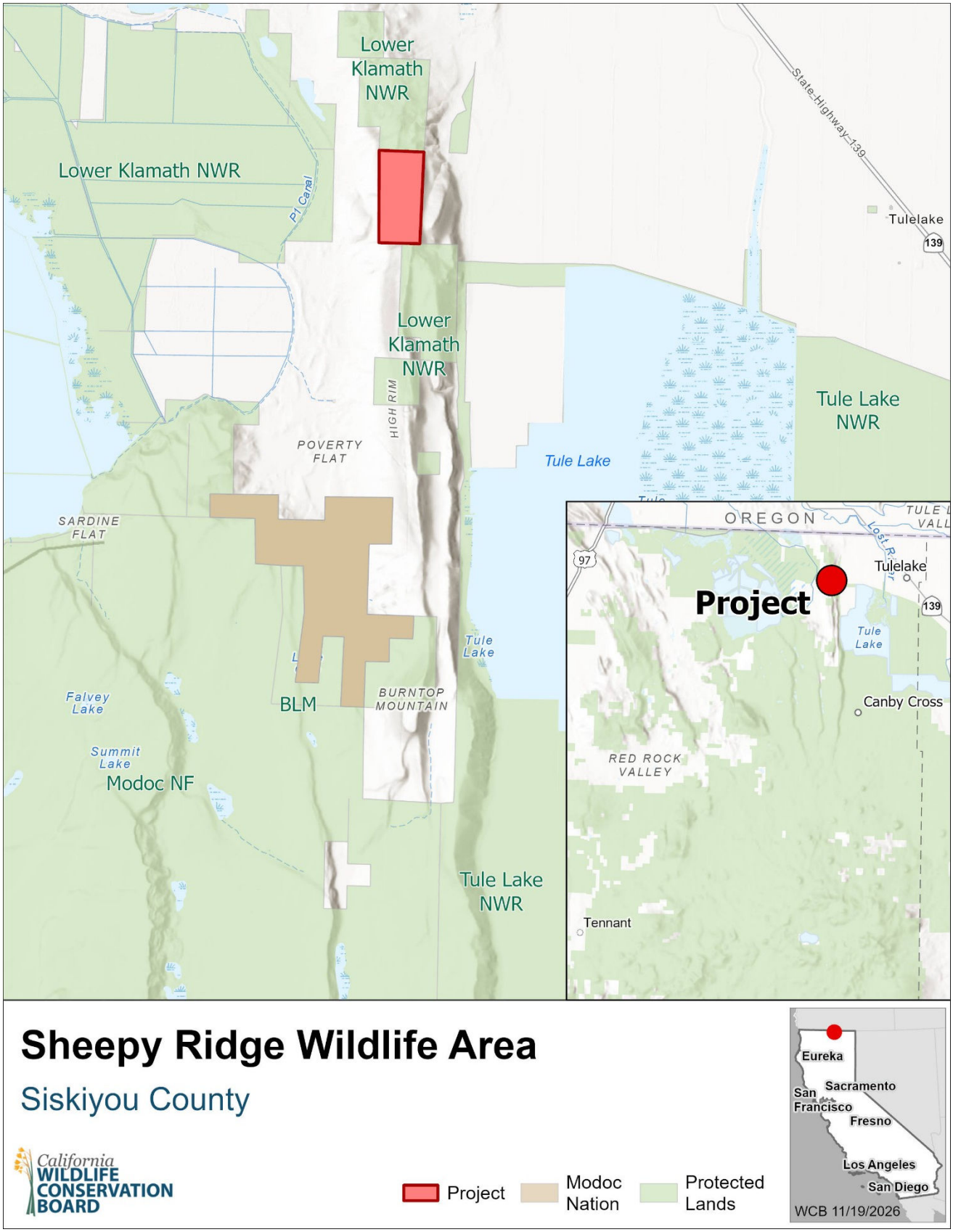
Location: 5 miles west of Tulelake
County: Siskiyou County
Acres: 320± (Property)

Project Highlights

- California Department of Fish and Wildlife is transferring Sheepy Ridge Wildlife Area (Property) to the Modoc Nation.
- The Property is located in the ancestral territory of the Modoc Nation, which is actively acquiring other lands near the Property.
- The Property is surrounded by Tule Lake National Wildlife Refuge and Lower Klamath Lake Wildlife Refuge.
- The US Fish and Wildlife Service has designated its lands surrounding the Property as closed to hunting, effectively eliminating the hunting public access for which the Property was acquired.
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife decided that due to the lost hunting access, the most appropriate path forward is to transfer ownership of the Property to the Modoc Nation, as the Modoc Nation recently acquired land adjacent to the south edge of the Property,
- This action is consistent with Executive Order N-15-19, directing all state agencies to correct historic wrongs.
- Property transfer is dependent on California Fish and Game Commission approval to delist the property as a Wildlife Area under Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations. Transfer will not occur until the Title 14 process is complete.

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: Yes, Property is located in a disadvantaged community.
- Tribal Partnerships: Yes, the Property is being transferred to the Modoc Nation.
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Acquisitions; Pathway 4, Pathway 7, Strengthen Coordination Among Governments.
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B1.1, B3.1
- Public Access: Any future public access will be allowed at the discretion of the Modoc Nation.


Lower Klamath NWR
Lower Klamath NWR
PI Canal
Lower Klamath NWR
HIGH RIM
POVERTY FLAT
Tule Lake
Tule Lake NWR
State Highway 139
Tulelake
139
SARDINE FLAT
BLM
BURNTOP MOUNTAIN
Tule Lake
Falvey Lake
Summit Lake
Modoc NF
Tule Lake NWR
OREGON
97
Tulelake
Project
139
Tule Lake
Canby Cross
RED ROCK VALLEY
Tennant
Sheepy Ridge Wildlife Area
Siskiyou County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Modoc Nation
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 11/19/2026

Long-Term Management

The Modoc Nation owns approximately 3,000 acres of land in Siskiyou and Modoc counties. It recently purchased 850 acres with funding from the California Natural Resource Agency's Tribal Nature-Based Solutions grant program. The Modoc Nation is committed to working with local partners including the Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and US Fish and Wildlife Service to reconnect habitats in the Klamath Basin. The transfer documents and grant deed require that the Modoc Nation manage the Property, in perpetuity, for fish and wildlife habitat conservation, restoration, and cultural reconnection.

Project Funding

The Department of General Services approved fair market value is $96,000. CDFW is transferring the property to the Modoc Nation at no cost.

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Chief Robert Burkybile III, Modoc Nation

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

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.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Megan Dahle, District 1
- Assembly: Assemblymember Heather Hadwick, District 1

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the WCB approve this project as proposed, authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project, and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.



Aerial Photo- View generally south



Aerial Photo- View generally north

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State of California – Natural Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
Northern Region
601 Locust Street
Redding, CA 96001
www.wildlife.ca.gov

GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor
CHARLTON H. BONHAM, Director

November 8, 2023

Dr. Jennifer Norris
Executive Director
Wildlife Conservation Board
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244

SUBJECT: TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP FOR SHEEPY RIDGE WILDLIFE AREA

Dear Dr. Jennifer Norris,

This letter is being written in support of the transfer in fee title of the Sheepy Ridge Wildlife Area (SRWA) to the Modoc Nation.

The 320-acre SRWA (APN 0001-0040-0100), located in Siskiyou County, was purchased in 1955 for the primary purpose of providing public access for hunting opportunities. The property is situated between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)-owned Lower Klamath and Tule Lake National Wildlife Refuges.

USFWS approached the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) about obtaining an easement across the property to develop an interpretive hiking trail connecting the Lower Klamath and Tule Lake National Wildlife Refuges. After internal discussion, it was decided that CDFW would transfer fee title to the property to the USFWS. During the early stages of developing the transfer, the Modoc Nation, a Federally recognized tribe, expressed their interest in regaining stewardship of the Sheepy Peak property. Notices regarding potential interest in the land were sent to California Native American Tribes after obtaining a list through the Native American Heritage Commission. A formal consultation was conducted between CDFW and the Modoc Nation and transfer of the property to the Modoc Nation is supported by both CDFW and USFWS.

The USFWS is already in the process of working with the Modoc Nation to construct an interpretive hiking trail once the property is transferred. This transfer will still benefit public access to the property and will improve management and stewardship as described in the October 19, 2023 letter from Chief Burkybile. CDFW is honored to take part in and support returning these sacred lands back to Indigenous hands.

If you have any questions concerning this transfer, please contact Senior Environmental Scientist Steve Burton at (530) 340-0104 or steve.burton@wildlife.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:
Tina Bartlett
1D82ADE7303A474...

Tina Bartlett
Regional Manager
Northern Region

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ec: Wildlife Conservation Board
Dr. Jennifer Norris, jennifer.norris@wildlife.ca.gov
Kendall Webster, kendall.webster@wildlife.ca.gov

Modoc Nation
Chief Robert Burkybile III, robert.burkybile@modocnation.com
Ken Sandusky, kenneth.sandusky@modocnation.com

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Viola Randall, viola_randall@fws.gov

California Department of Fish and Wildlife
Sarah Fonseca, Tribal.Liaison@wildlife.ca.gov
Jeff Stoddard, jeffrey.stoddard@wildlife.ca.gov
Steve Burton, steve.burton@wildlife.ca.gov
Mike Sandahl, michael.sandahl@wildlife.ca.gov

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Modoc Nation

22 N. Eight Tribes Trail
Miami, OK 74354
(918) 542-1190
modocnation.com

Sheepy Peak Land Back Request Update

October 19, 2023

Jeffrey Stoddard, Lands and Wildlife Program Manager
California Department of Fish & Wildlife
601 Locust Street
Redding, California 96001

Mr. Stoddard,

We deeply appreciate CDFW's and the State of California's efforts to return Sheepy Peak to the Modoc People. The Modoc Nation is a Federally Recognized Native American Tribe descended from Modocs who were removed from California to Oklahoma on cattle cars after the Modoc War at Captain Jack's Stronghold in what is now the Lava Beds National Monument. The Modoc Nation is based in Miami, Oklahoma, but is now also located and expanding business and community interests in Northern California.

The effort to regain stewardship of this sacred peak has already helped us to reconnect with our family and ancestral neighbors in our Traditional Homelands, as we went before the Klamath Tribes General Council for their support and cooperation. We made the commitment at that time to work with Klamath Tribes representatives to manage this land should it be transferred back to Modoc Nation stewardship. We also plan to maintain our commitment to work with US Fish and Wildlife Service to provide opportunities for refuge visitors to access this highest peak of Sheepy Ridge and interpret indigenous and natural history in the area, with the only caveat to provide Modoc elder and limited mobility vehicular access to the peak through refuge lands.

It is also important to communicate how this project relates to our pending California Tribal Nature Based Solutions grant proposal to purchase an additional 1,700 acres of private farmland and Lower Klamath Lakebed adjacent to Sheepy Peak and existing Modoc Nation fee lands. Our preproposal for this funding was submitted under the Land Back/Planning category. If awarded, the Sheepy Peak parcel would be included in the ensuing Land and Resource Management Planning process to guide its future stewardship.

These are exciting and encouraging times as we work together to address past iniquities and write a new history of respect and cooperation. Again, we appreciate your efforts and hope the transfer of these lands is a first step toward enduring and effective partnership for generations to come.

If you have any further questions or would like to tour Modoc Nation properties and see what we are doing, please contact Ken Sandusky at 541-891-7321.

Sincerely,

Chief Robert Burkybile III

Modoc Nation

8. Mattole Headwaters Habitat Enhancement **Restoration**
Purchase Price: $688,000 **Implementation**
Fund Source(s): Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014 (Proposition 1 – Enhanced stream flows), Water Code Section 79733
Grantee: Mattole Salmon Group
Landowner: Sanctuary Forest, Inc. and three Private Landowners
Location: 0.5 miles southwest of Whitethorn
Counties: Humboldt, Mendocino

Property Highlights

- Thinning of approximately 32 acres of riparian forest to reduce water use and fire risks.
- Enhancement of two, half-mile reaches of waterway along the Mattole River and McKee Creek with large wood debris and boulders to increase habitat complexity.
- Key species: coho salmon, Chinook salmon, steelhead, Pacific lamprey.

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: Yes. This project is located within an SDAC census tract. It will increase groundwater reliability, reduce wildfire risks, and provide employment opportunities to the local community.
- Tribal Partnerships: Yes. The Wailaki Tribe, White Lily Clan and the Bear River Band of the Rohnerville Rancheria were both involved in the planning efforts leading to this project and are included in the budget for cultural resource monitoring work.
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B2.2


Thorn Junction
Shelter Cove Rd
Mattole River
BLM
BLM
Vanauken Creek
Hungry Gulch Rd
Anderson Creek
Harris Creek Rd
Whitethorn Grove
Whitethorn
Gibson Creek Rd
Mill Creek
Road A
Road A Rd
Sinkyone Wilderness SP
101
Eureka
Fortuna
Redcrest
Garberville
Shelter Cove
Project
Pacific Ocean
1
Mattole Headwaters Habitat Enhancement
Humboldt County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 11/19/2026

Project Description

Habitat quality and capacity in the Mattole River and its tributaries have been reduced by past timber harvest activities and hotter summers, resulting in dense second-growth forest and reduced summer streamflow. The Mattole Headwaters Habitat Enhancement project (Project) reaches are essentially devoid of large instream wood, a key ingredient for habitat complexity in this stream system. The Project will add large wood debris to approximately one mile of stream in the upper mainstem Mattole River and McKee Creek (an important tributary to the Mattole) which will increase pool depth and cover, slow-water velocity refugia for juvenile fish during winter high flows, and retention of spawning gravel. Thinning 32 acres of riparian forest will speed the development of old-growth forest characteristics, increase long-term potential for instream wood recruitment, and reduce evapotranspiration, The project is expected to reduce overall water use, reduce wildfire risks and increase summer streamflow by:

- Adding large wood debris at 24 sites in the mainstem Mattole River and 6 sites in lower McKee Creek, consisting of over 113 pieces of large wood debris.
- Thinning 32 acres of riparian forest.
- Slowing water velocities to provide refugia for juvenile salmonids.
- Allowing gravel bed formation and sorting to create spawning beds for salmonids and lamprey.

Long-Term Management

The Mattole Salmon Group has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the Project, including management of the Property. If at any time during the 20-year life of the Project's Long-Term Management Period, Grantee 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	Totals
Project Management and Administration	$16,000	---	$16,000
Permits and Approvals	$20,000	---	$20,000
Implementation	$541,000	$92,000	$633,000
Project Monitoring	$30,000	---	$30,000
Indirect Costs	$81,000	---	$81,000
Total	$688,000	$92,000	$780,000

Non-WCB funders include:

- Lost Coast Forestlands - $41,600
- Sanctuary Forest - $12,000
- Combination of private landowners - $38,400

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Dorothy Hoaglin, Chairwoman, and Markida Hoaglin, Secretary, Wailaki Tribe, Band of White Lily Clan
- Josefina Frank, Chairwoman, Bear River Band of the Rohnerville Rancheria
- Michelle Bushnell, 2nd District Supervisor, Humboldt County Board of Supervisors
- Sarah Vroom, Executive Director, Mattole Restoration Council
- April Newlander, Executive Director, Sanctuary Forest Inc.

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

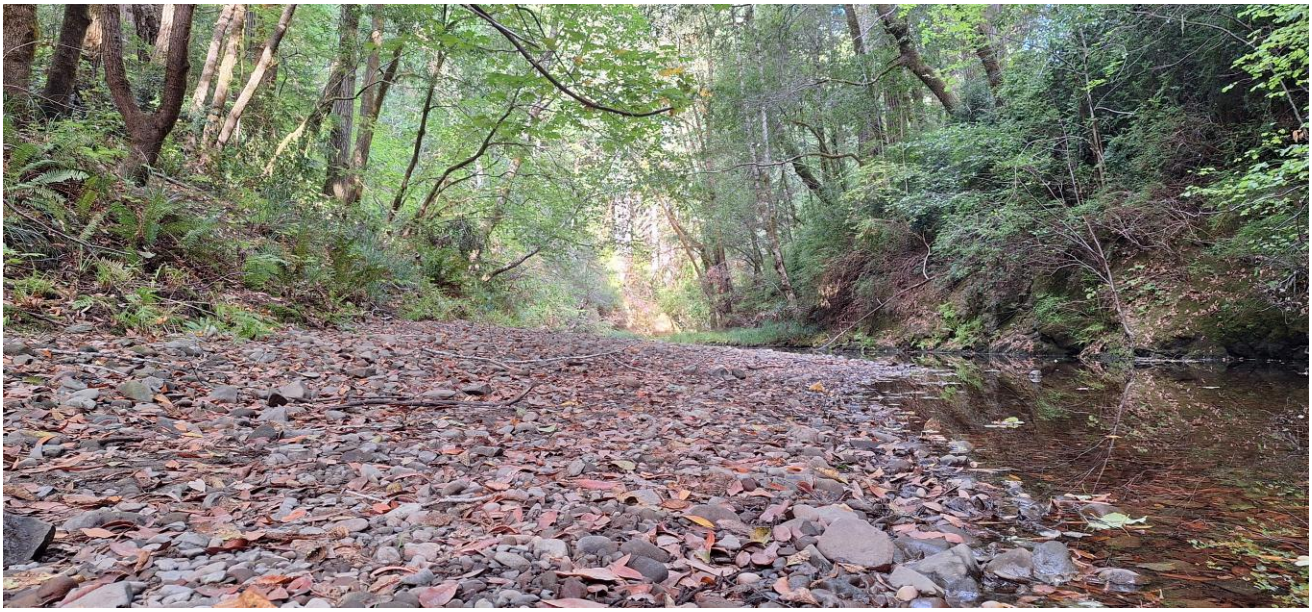
The Humboldt County Planning Department, as lead agency, determined that the Project is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to the Statutory Exemption for Restoration Projects (SERP), Public Resources Code section 21080.56, as a project that meets all of the following conditions: (1) the Project is 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. Staff considered the lead agency's CEQA exemption and, subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Mike McGuire, District 2
- Assembly: Assemblymember Chris Rogers, District 2

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the WCB approve this project as proposed, authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project, and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.



The Mattole River channel with no large wood debris, flat riverbed, and straightened channel. These characteristics all reduce the habitat value for Coho Salmon, Chinook Salmon, Steelhead, and Pacific Lamprey. Adding large wood debris and thinning the surrounding forests will increase stream flow and improve spawning and rearing habitat for native fish.



McKee Creek, a tributary to the Mattole River, showing deeply incised channel, very little large wood debris, and flattened and simplified creek bed. These characteristics all reduce the habitat value for Coho Salmon, Chinook Salmon, Steelhead, and Pacific Lamprey. Adding large wood debris and thinning the surrounding forests will increase stream flow and improve spawning and rearing habitat for native fish.

WAILAKI TRIBE

BAND OF WHITE LILY CLAN

Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB)
715 P Street, 17th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814
February 6,2026

RE: Support for Mattole Headwaters Habitat Enhancement Project

Dear WCB Technical Reviewers,

On behalf of the Wailaki Tribe, Band of White Lily Clan, I would like to express our strong support for the Mattole Salmon Group's efforts to improve salmonid habitat in the upper mainstem Mattole River and McKee Creek, Humboldt County, CA. This project will improve instream habitat conditions for salmon and steelhead in the headwaters of the Mattole and encourage natural stream function in an area that is critical for juvenile rearing and spawning.

Efforts such as the Mattole Headwaters Habitat Enhancement Project, along with other ongoing restoration efforts in the basin, represent an important step toward strengthening salmonid populations over time and restoring Wailaki cultural connections that have been disrupted for generations.

The Wailaki Tribe, WLC strongly supports the efforts of the Mattole Salmon Group and urges the Wildlife Conservation Board to approve funding. We appreciate the opportunity to support restoration that advances salmon recovery, ecosystem resilience, and provides stewardship to fish species that have deep cultural significance.

Sincerely,

Dorothy Hoaglin

Dorothy Hoaglin, Chairwoman

Markida Hoaglin

Markida Hoaglin, Secretary

BEAR RIVER BAND of the ROHNERVILLE RANCHERIA
266 KEISNER RD LOLETA, CA 95551-9707 PHONE 707-733-1900 FAX 707-733-1723

February 9, 2026

Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB)
715 P Street, 17th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for Mattole Headwaters Habitat Enhancement Project

Dear WCB Technical Reviewer

On behalf of the Bear River Band of the Rohnerville Rancheria, I would like to express our strong support for the Mattole Salmon Group's efforts to improve salmonid habitat in the upper main stem Mattole River and McKee Creek, Humboldt County, CA. This project will improve instream habitat conditions for salmon and steelhead in the headwaters of the Mattole and encourage natural stream function in an area that is critical for juvenile rearing and spawning

Efforts such as the Mattole Headwaters Habitat Enhancement Project, along with other ongoing restoration efforts in the basin, represent an important step toward encouraging the return of natural processes to one of the most important spawning and rearing reaches for salmonids in the Mattole.

The Bear River Band of the Rohnerville Rancheria strongly supports the efforts of the Mattole Salmon Group and urges the Wildlife Conservation Board to approve funding. We appreciate the opportunity to support restoration that advances salmon recovery, ecosystem resilience, and provides stewardship to deeply important fish species.

Sincerely,

Josefina Frank

Josefina Frank
Chairwoman
Bear River Band of the Rohnerville Rancheria

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT
825 5TH STREET, ROOM 111
EUREKA, CALIFORNIA 95501 PHONE: (707) 476-2390

February 17, 2026

Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB)
715 P Street, 17th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for Mattole Headwaters Habitat Enhancement Project

Dear WCB Technical Reviewers,

As Second District Supervisor Michelle Bushnell, I am writing to express my strong support for the Mattole Salmon Group's efforts to improve salmonid habitat in the upper mainstem of the Mattole River and McKee Creek in Humboldt County. This project will improve instream habitat conditions for salmon and steelhead in the Mattole headwaters while encouraging natural stream function in an area that is critical for juvenile rearing and spawning. The Mattole watershed is a treasured resource for our community, and this work reflects a strong local commitment to restoring and protecting it.

The Mattole River is a salmon stronghold that supports a robust population of steelhead, a recovering population of Chinook salmon, and a small but persistent population of coho salmon. The river and its tributaries have been identified as high priorities for restoration in state and federal recovery plans due to the presence of these salmonid populations and the watershed's exceptional potential for high-quality habitat. Protecting and enhancing these fisheries is deeply important to our region's ecological health and cultural heritage.

This project presents a timely opportunity to restore natural processes in one of the most important spawning and rearing reaches in the Mattole system, create lasting ecological benefits, and steward fish species with deep cultural significance. I strongly encourage the California Wildlife Conservation Board to support this important effort.

I am grateful for the opportunity to support this work and to advocate for continued investment in the health of the Mattole watershed.

Sincerely,

Michelle Bushnell

Michelle Bushnell
2nd District Supervisor
Humboldt County Board of Supervisors

Mattole Restoration Council

www.mattole.org

Main Office
PO Box 160, Petrolia, CA 95558
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Fax: (707)629-3577
mrc@mattole.org

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upriver@mattole.org

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GIS Technician

Emily McDonald
Administrative Director and Contract Manager

Joseph Sandoval
Prescribed Fire & Forest Restoration Project Coordinator. Lead Agency Training Instructor

Theresa Vallotton
Nick's Interns & Step-Up Coordinator

Sarah Vroom
Executive Director

Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB)
715 P Street, 17th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for Mattole Headwaters Habitat Enhancement Project

Dear WCB Technical Reviewers,

On behalf of the Mattole Restoration Council, I would like to express our strong support for the Mattole Salmon Group's efforts to improve salmonid habitat in the upper mainstem Mattole River and McKee Creek, Humboldt County, CA. This project will improve instream habitat conditions for salmon and steelhead in the headwaters of the Mattole and encourage natural stream function in an area that is critical for juvenile rearing and spawning.

Support from the Wildlife Conservation Board is essential to completing restoration on California State Parks lands, which make up a large part of the greater project area. Without this funding, the project would be incomplete, and the benefits of habitat continuity would be lost.

We work in close collaboration with the Mattole Salmon Group as part of the Mattole River and Range Partnership (MRRP) and are thrilled to see their adaptive and creative conservation and management in the Mattole River headwaters.

This is a timely opportunity to encourage the return of natural processes to one of the most important spawning and rearing reaches for salmonids in the Mattole, create lasting ecological betterment, and provide stewardship to fish species that have deep cultural significance. I strongly encourage the Wildlife Conservation Board to support this project.

We are grateful for the opportunity to support this work.

Sarah Vroom

Sarah Vroom
Executive Director
Mattole Restoration Council

Sanctuary Forest
PO Box 166
Whitethorn, CA
95589

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Seasonal Program Assistant
Galen Doherty
Seasonal Project Coordinator
John Neill
Seasonal Implementation Specialist

Phone: 707-986-1087
Fax: 707-986-1607
sanctuary@sanctuaryforest.org
www.sanctuaryforest.org

Wildlife Conservation Board
715 P Street, 17th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for Mattole Headwaters Habitat Enhancement Project

Dear WCB Technical Reviewers,

On behalf of Sanctuary Forest, I would like to express our strong support for the Mattole Salmon Group's efforts to improve salmonid habitat in the upper mainstem Mattole River and McKee Creek in Humboldt County, California. This project will improve instream habitat conditions for salmon and steelhead in the headwaters of the Mattole and restore natural stream function in an area that is critical for juvenile rearing and spawning.

Sanctuary Forest and the Mattole Salmon Group work in close and ongoing collaboration to restore salmonid habitat and improve streamflows in the headwaters of the Mattole River. As partners in the Mattole River and Range Partnership (MRRP), our organizations coordinate restoration planning and implementation, share technical expertise, and align habitat enhancement with watershed-wide water conservation and streamflow improvement efforts. This close partnership ensures that instream habitat projects and flow enhancement strategies are mutually reinforcing and contribute to the long-term recovery of salmonid populations.

We are thrilled to see the Mattole Salmon Group's adaptive and creative conservation and management in the Mattole River headwaters. This project reflects years of collaborative planning and a shared commitment to restoring natural processes in one of the most important spawning and rearing reaches for salmonids in the watershed.

Support from the Wildlife Conservation Board is essential to completing restoration on California State Parks lands, which make up a large part of the greater project area. Without this funding, the project would be incomplete, and the benefits of habitat continuity and watershed-scale restoration would be diminished.

This is a timely opportunity to accelerate the return of natural processes, create lasting ecological benefits, and provide stewardship to fish species that have deep cultural significance. We strongly encourage the Wildlife Conservation Board to fund this project and help ensure its successful completion.

Sincerely,



April Newlander
Executive Director
Sanctuary Forest Inc.

9. North Coast Range Fen Conservation Area (Woodcock) **Acquisition**
Purchase Price: $600,000 **CDFW Fee**
Fund Source(s): Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c)
Location: 12 miles east of Bridgeville
County: Humboldt
Acres: 110± (Property)

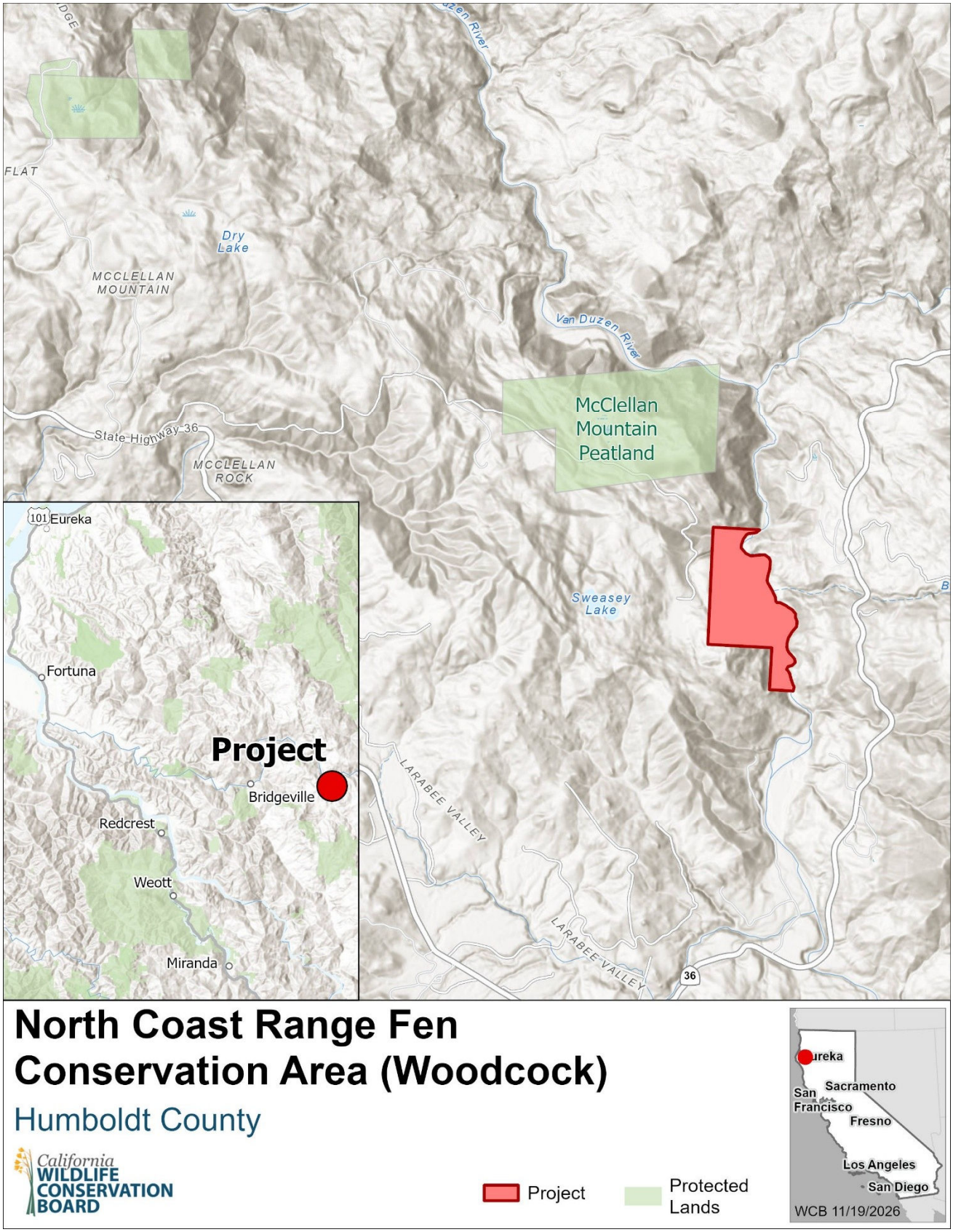
Project Highlights

- Habitats represented: stream habitat, spring and wetland complex, mixed evergreen hardwood forest, and riparian forest habitat.
- Key species and special status species: summer steelhead trout, foothill yellow-legged frog, northern red-legged frog, southern torrent salamander, coastal tailed frog, deer, and mountain lion.
- Property will be incorporated into the CDFW owned and managed North Coast Range Fen Conservation Area (NCRFCA).

Inclusion of the property in the NCRFCA will preserve 1 mile of stream habitat and a large spring and wetland complex, which is a cold-water source supporting endangered summer steelhead trout in the Van Duzen River.

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Acquisitions
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B1.1, C1.1
- Public Access: No


FLAT
Dry Lake
MCCLELLAN MOUNTAIN
Van Duzen River
McClellan Mountain Peatland
State Highway 36
MCCLELLAN ROCK
Sweasey Lake
LARABEE VALLEY
LARABEE VALLEY
36
101 Eureka
Fortuna
Project
Bridgeville
Redcrest
Weott
Miranda
North Coast Range Fen Conservation Area (Woodcock)
Humboldt County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 11/19/2026

Long-Term Management

The 110-acre property will be incorporated into the CDFW owned and managed North Coast Range Fen Conservation Area (NCRFCA). Management of NCRFCA is focused on ecological values and protecting in-stream water resources. Once incorporated, the property will undergo forest restoration to improve fire resiliency and long-term forest health.

Project Funding

The Department of General Services approved fair market value is $600,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	$600,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	$600,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- None received

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

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.

State Government

- Senate: Senate: Senator Mike McGuire, District 2
- Assembly: Assemblymember Chris Rogers, District 2

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the WCB approve this project as proposed, authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project, and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

North Coast Range Fen Conservation Area (Woodcock)

Property is bordered by the north fork of the Little Van Duzen River



1

North Coast Range Fen Conservation Area (Woodcock)

Riparian forest on the property



2

10. Calvi Ranch Public Access Planning **Infrastructure Planning**

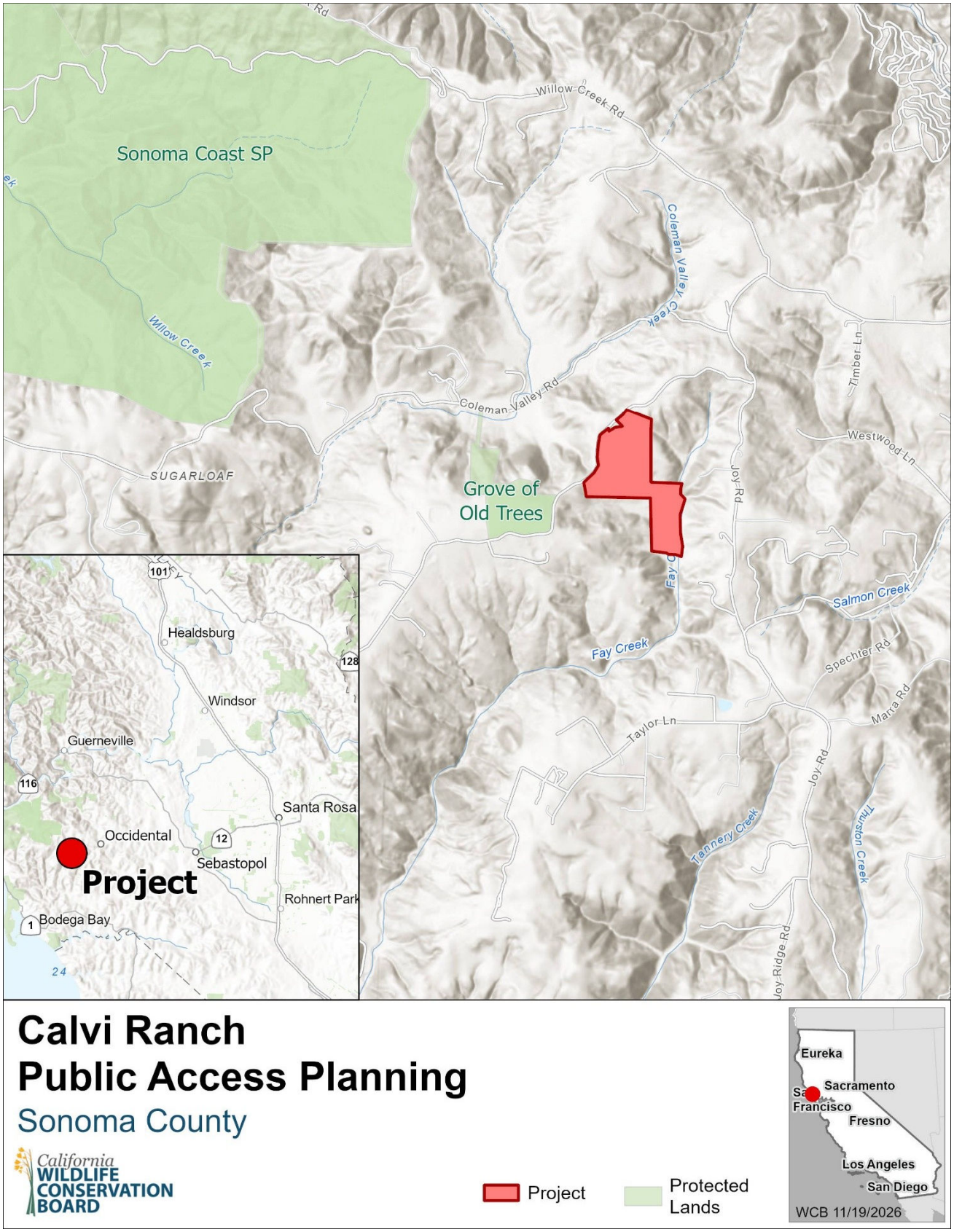
WCB Grant: $750,000
Fund Source(s): Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024 (Proposition 4 – Existing Programs), Public Resources Code Section 93010 (SB 105, Sec. 94)
Grantee: LandPaths
Landowner: LandPaths
Location: 3 miles west of Occidental
County: Sonoma

Property Highlights

- Public access planning across 73 acres of old and second growth redwood forest, oak woodland, riparian and grassland habitat.
- Directly adjacent to the publicly accessible, 49-acre “Grove of Old Trees”. Planning work will contribute to improving amenities across both sites.
- ADA accessibility incorporated into planning for trails, parking and restrooms.
- Project will develop a guide for sustainable management of Fay Creek and onsite rare serpentine grasslands and will focus on reducing wildfire risk.
- Notable species: California giant salamander, western pond turtle, burrowing owl, mountain lion.

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: Yes, grantee hosts school programs from majority Title 1 schools and a Spanish language outings program for children and community members. Grantee intends to use the Calvi Ranch site to continue this work.
- Tribal Partnerships: Yes, grantee intends to partner with the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria and the Kashia Band of Pomo Indians to conduct cultural resource surveys and advise on guide for sustainable management of the site.
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: P1.3


Sonoma Coast SP
Willow Creek Rd
Willow Creek
Coleman Valley Creek
Coleman Valley Rd
Timber Ln
Westwood Ln
SUGARLOAF
Grove of Old Trees
Joy Rd
Fay Creek
Salmon Creek
Spechter Rd
Marra Rd
Taylor Ln
Tannery Creek
Thurston Creek
Joy Ridge Rd
101
Healdsburg
128
Windsor
Guerneville
116
Santa Rosa
Occidental
12
Sebastopol
Project
Rohnert Park
1
Bodega Bay
24
Calvi Ranch
Public Access Planning
Sonoma County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 11/19/2026

Project Description

The Calvi Ranch Public Access Planning Project (Project) site was recently acquired by LandPaths to preserve habitat and provide public access, but it currently lacks formal amenities for visitors. The site hosts redwood forests, expansive grasslands and several structures. This project develops a Site Stewardship Plan and Public Access Plan to provide guidance for stewardship of the site's natural resources and to develop planning documents for up to four miles of hiking trails, parking, and educational opportunities. The Project will create these comprehensive plans by:

- Working in concert with adjacent landowners, tribal representatives, agencies and additional stakeholders to garner input.
- Conducting cultural and natural resource surveys to inform site stewardship.
- Completing a Public Access Plan for trails, visitor amenities and educational programming, with particular focus on using existing structures where possible and complying with ADA accessibility standards.
- Completing a Site Stewardship Plan to inform on-site fire fuel reduction and management of coastal grassland and creeks.
- Developing 100% designs for public access elements described in the Public Access Plan.
- Executing a CEQA addendum (if deemed necessary).

Long-Term Management

Not applicable to this Project.

Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Project Management	$128,019	$190	$144,209
Resource Enhancement Planning	$110,800	$820,224	$924,776
Public Access Planning	$303,000	$379,200	$844,200
Engineering Plans	$140,000	$0	$153,000
Indirect	$68,181	$10,1340	$86,348
Total	$750,000	$1,209,748	$2,152,533

Non-WCB funders include:

- LandPaths - $896,000
- State Coastal Conservancy - $103,500
- Save the Redwoods League - $4,000

- Resources Legacy Fund - $50,000
- American Endowment Foundation - $100,000
- Caryl & Mickey Hart - $50,000
- North Bay Forest Improvement Program - $6,248

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Jared Huffman, Member of Congress, Congress of the United States, 2nd District, House of Representatives
- Mike McGuire, Senator, 2nd District, California State Senate
- Chris Rogers, Assemblymember, Assembly, 2nd District, California Legislature
- James Gore, Supervisor, Sonoma County Board of Supervisors
- Lynda Hopkins, Supervisor, Sonoma County Board of Supervisors
- Brock Dolman, Co-Founder and Program Director, Occidental Arts & Ecology Center

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

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.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Mike McGuire, District 2
- Assembly: Assemblymember Chris Rogers, District 2

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the WCB approve this project as proposed, authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project, and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.



Coastal prairie located on Calvi Ranch with Cost Redwood and Live Oaks in the distance.



Old Ranch house can be utilized as an education space.

JARED HUFFMAN
2ND DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

WASHINGTON OFFICE
2445 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
PHONE: (202) 225–5161

WEBSITE: huffman.house.gov

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515–0502

COMMITTEE ON
NATURAL RESOURCES
WATER, WILDLIFE, AND FISHERIES – RANKING MEMBER
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COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE
HIGHWAYS AND TRANSIT
WATER RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT
RAILROADS, PIPELINES, AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PUBLIC BUILDINGS,
AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

June 25, 2025

Dr. Jennifer Norris
Executive Director
California Wildlife Conservation Board
715 P Street, 17th Floor,
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Director Norris:

I am writing to support LandPaths' application to the Wildlife Conservation Board for funding to acquire and conserve Calvi Ranch, a 70-acre property in Sonoma County.

The Calvi Ranch site features second-growth and old-growth redwoods and coastal prairie. The property is currently privately owned. Without public protection and conservation, the area is vulnerable to development and timber harvesting, threatening the fragile habitat and old growth ecosystem.

This location is in close proximity to LandPaths' existing 49.5-acre Grove of Old Trees preserve (Grove). The Grove is the first privately-owned, free, open to the public nature preserve in Sonoma County. During peak usage the Grove is consistently beyond capacity. With the acquisition of the Calvi Ranch site, the Grove would more than double the size of the existing preserve, add creek-side access that connects to Salmon Creek, and provide additional trail miles. This project has multiple benefits. It will increase protection of a vulnerable ecosystem, expand habitat connectivity, increase access to public outdoor recreation, and enhance the local economy in this rural area.

LandPaths has a 28-year history of protecting land, engaging youth in outdoor activities, and providing public environmental education in Sonoma County. LandPaths has successfully protected thousands of acres across Sonoma County for future generations including 11 separate site acquisition projects.

Thank you for your full and fair consideration for this application. Please contact my District Director, Shane Trimmer, at 415-258-9657 if you need additional information.

Sincerely,

JARED HUFFMAN
Member of Congress

California State Senate

SENATOR MIKE MCGUIRE

PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA'S SECOND SENATE DISTRICT

June 10, 2025

Dr. Jennifer Norris
Wildlife Conservation Board
715 P Street, 17th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Dr. Norris:

I am writing to express my strong support for Landpaths' grant application to the Wildlife Conservation Board to fund the acquisition, enhancement, and planning project at the Calvi Ranch, an 84-acre parcel located adjacent to LandPaths' Grove of Old Trees Preserve.

This project will focus on crafting both a site Stewardship Plan and Public Access Plan, which will be critical to foster engagement between Landpaths and the Calvi Ranch stakeholders to plan for the Ranch's care and future use. The proposed planning process will culminate in a Sonoma County application for a Conditional Use Permit to offer public access to this site as well as the Grove of the Old Trees.

LandPaths has made a profound impact on Sonoma County over the last 28 years, including direct involvement with 11 acquisition projects, and successfully protecting thousands of acres. This project would greatly contribute to the state's climate resiliency efforts by increasing essential land protection and promoting public access to community resources.

I respectfully encourage you to support this proposal. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to us at 707-576-2771.

Warmest regards,

MIKE McGUIRE
Senator

STATE CAPITOL
P.O. BOX 942849
SACRAMENTO, CA 94249-0002
(916) 319-2002
FAX (916) 319-2102

DISTRICT OFFICE
50 D STREET, SUITE 450
SANTA ROSA, CA 95404
(707) 576-2526
FAX: (707) 576-2297

E-MAIL
Assemblymember.Rogers@assembly.ca.gov

Assembly
California Legislature

CHRIS ROGERS
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, SECOND DISTRICT

COMMITTEES
BUDGET
COMMUNICATIONS AND CONVEYANCE
TRANSPORTATION
UTILITIES AND ENERGY
WATER, PARKS, AND WILDLIFE

BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE NO. 4 ON CLIMATE CRISIS, RESOURCES, ENERGY, AND TRANSPORTATION

June 17, 2025

Dr. Jennifer Norris
Wildlife Conservation Board
715 P Street, 17th Floor,
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for LandPaths' WCB grant proposal for Calvi Ranch acquisition, resource enhancement and public access planning

Dear Dr. Norris:

I am writing to strongly support LandPaths' grant application to the Wildlife Conservation Board for funds to acquire, enhance resources and plan for public access for the Calvi Ranch.

This magnificent 70-acre property features easy access to mature second and old-growth redwoods and coastal prairie. This proposal is an essential part of the project to acquire the Calvi Ranch and plan for its care and future use, adding it to the near-adjacent 49-acre *Grove of Old Trees,* more than doubling the size of the existing preserve. The Grove is a publicly accessible preserve owned and operated by LandPaths since 2000, and when this project is successfully realized it will add creek-side access that connects to Salmon Creek and provides additional trail miles.

LandPaths' proposal requests funding for resource enhancement and public access planning for the Calvi Ranch, including essential fish and wildlife habitat protection, old-growth and mature second-growth redwood stewardship, enhanced wildfire resilience, and tribal and public access.

Wildlife Conservation Board funding will specifically support a series of natural and cultural resource inventories, creating a site Stewardship Plan that will enhance habitat values, and creating a stewardship implementation schedule for other critical needs, including the serpentine grasslands and reducing wildfire risk through beneficial fire, thinning, and other tools.

In recognition of these valuable benefits, I strongly support this grant application for funds toward the timely purchase of Calvi Ranch. Please contact my office if you have any questions at 707-576-2526.

Sincerely,

Chris Rogers

CHRIS ROGERS
Assemblymember, 2nd District

CR: sa

SONOMA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
575 ADMINISTRATION DRIVE, RM. 100A
SANTA ROSA, CALIFORNIA 95403

JAMES GORE
4TH DISTRICT SUPERVISOR
Email: District4@sonoma-county.org
Phone: 707-565-1944

June 5, 2025

Dr. Jennifer Norris
Wildlife Conservation Board
715 P Street, 17th Floor,
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for LandPaths' WCB grant proposal for Calvi Ranch acquisition, resource enhancement and public access planning

Dear Dr. Norris,

I am writing to strongly support LandPaths' grant application to the Wildlife Conservation Board for funds to acquire, enhance resources and plan for public access for the Calvi Ranch, a site with meaningful conservation and community value.

This magnificent 70-acre property features easy access to mature second and old-growth redwoods and coastal prairie. This proposal is an essential part of the project to acquire the Calvi Ranch and plan for its care and future use, adding it to the near-adjacent 49-acre *Grove of Old Trees,* more than doubling the size of the existing preserve. The Grove is a publicly accessible preserve owned and operated by LandPaths since 2000, and when this project is successfully realized it will add creek-side access that connects to Salmon Creek and provides additional trail miles.

The Calvi Ranch is currently privately owned and has no protection. If LandPaths is not successful with this project, it could be converted to multiple additional residential structures or could be vulnerable to use for timber harvesting and/or boutique vineyards and other agriculture endeavors.

LandPaths' proposal requests funding for resource enhancement and public access planning for the Calvi Ranch, including essential fish and wildlife habitat protection, old-growth and mature second-growth redwood stewardship, enhanced wildfire resilience, and tribal and public access.

Wildlife Conservation Board funding will specifically support a series of natural and cultural resource inventories, creating a site Stewardship Plan that will enhance habitat values, and creating a stewardship implementation schedule for other critical needs, including the serpentine grasslands and reducing wildfire risk through beneficial fire, thinning, and other tools. LandPaths will work with the neighborhood group Friends of the Grove, other community members, and interested tribes to create an overall Public Access Plan. This plan will be the basis to open Calvi to the public. This plan will include conceptual designs for trails and visitor amenities, as well as programming elements to provide community benefits such as environmental education and activities that advance equity in the outdoors. The proposed planning process will culminate in a County application for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to offer public access to this site and the *Grove of the Old Trees.*

Over its history LandPaths has been directly involved with 11 acquisition projects, all successful, protecting thousands of acres across Sonoma County. I strongly support this grant application for funds toward the acquisition, resource enhancement, and public access planning for the Calvi Ranch.

Sincerely,

James Gore
Fourth District Sonoma County Supervisor

COUNTY OF SONOMA
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
575 ADMINISTRATION DRIVE, RM. 100A
SANTA ROSA, CALIFORNIA 95403
(707) 565-2241

June 6, 2025

Dr. Jennifer Norris
Wildlife Conservation Board
715 P Street, 17th Floor,
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for LandPaths' WCB grant proposal for Calvi Ranch acquisition, resource enhancement and public access planning

Dear Dr. Norris,

I am writing to strongly support LandPaths' grant application to the Wildlife Conservation Board for funds to acquire, enhance resources and plan for public access for the Calvi Ranch, a site with meaningful conservation and community value.

This magnificent 70-acre property features easy access to mature second and old-growth redwoods and coastal prairie. This proposal is an essential part of the project to acquire the Calvi Ranch and plan for its care and future use, adding it to the near-adjacent 49-acre Grove of Old Trees, more than doubling the size of the existing preserve. The Grove is a publicly accessible preserve owned and operated by LandPaths since 2000, and when this project is successfully realized it will add creek-side access that connects to Salmon Creek and provides additional trail miles.

The Calvi Ranch is currently privately owned and has no protection. If LandPaths is not successful with this project, it could be converted to multiple additional residential structures or could be vulnerable to use for timber harvesting and/or boutique vineyards and other agriculture endeavors.

LandPaths' proposal requests funding for resource enhancement and public access planning for the Calvi Ranch, including essential fish and wildlife habitat protection, old-growth and mature second-growth redwood stewardship, enhanced wildfire resilience, and tribal and public access.

Wildlife Conservation Board funding will specifically support a series of natural and cultural resource inventories, creating a site Stewardship Plan that will enhance habitat values, and creating a stewardship implementation schedule for other critical needs, including the serpentine grasslands and reducing wildfire risk through beneficial fire, thinning, and other tools. LandPaths will work with the neighborhood group Friends of the Grove, other community members, and interested tribes to create an overall Public Access Plan. This plan will be the basis to open Calvi to the public. This plan will include conceptual designs for trails and visitor amenities, as well as programming elements to provide community benefits such as environmental education and activities that advance equity in the outdoors. The proposed planning process will culminate in a County application for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to offer public access to this site and the *Grove of the Old Trees*.

COUNTY OF SONOMA
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
575 ADMINISTRATION DRIVE, RM. 100A
SANTA ROSA, CALIFORNIA 95403
(707) 565-2241

Over its history LandPaths has been directly involved with 11 acquisition projects, all successful, protecting thousands of acres across Sonoma County. I strongly support this grant application for funds toward the acquisition, resource enhancement, and public access planning for the Calvi Ranch.

Sincerely,

Lynda Hopkins
Supervisor, Fifth District
Sonoma County Board of Supervisors

OCCIDENTAL ARTS & ECOLOGY CENTER

15290 Coleman Valley Road, Occidental, CA 95465
707-874-1557 • oaec@oaec.org • www.oaec.org

Dr. Jennifer Norris
Wildlife Conservation Board
715 P Street, 17th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

October 7, 2026

Re: In Support of LandPaths acquisition of the Calvi Ranch in west Sonoma County.

Dear Executive Director Norris,

I am writing to strongly support LandPaths' grant application to the Wildlife Conservation Board for funds to enhance resources and plan for public access for the Calvi Ranch, a site with meaningful conservation and community value.

This magnificent 70-acre property features easy access to mature second and old-growth redwoods and coastal prairie. This proposal is an essential part of the project to acquire the Calvi Ranch and plan for its care and future use, adding it to the near-adjacent 49-acre Grove of Old Trees, more than doubling the size of the existing preserve. The Grove is a publicly accessible preserve owned and operated by LandPaths since 2000, and when this project is successfully realized it will add creek-side access that connects to Salmon Creek and provides additional trail miles.

The Calvi Ranch is currently privately owned and has no protection. If LandPaths is not successful with this project, it could be converted to multiple additional residential structures or could be vulnerable to use for timber harvesting and/or boutique vineyards and other agriculture endeavors.

LandPaths' proposal requests funding for resource enhancement and public access planning for the Calvi Ranch, including essential fish and wildlife habitat protection, old-growth and mature second-growth redwood stewardship, enhanced wildfire resilience, and tribal and public access. Wildlife Conservation Board funding will specifically support a series of natural and cultural resource inventories, creating a site Stewardship Plan that will enhance habitat values, and creating a stewardship implementation schedule for other critical needs, including the serpentine grasslands and reducing wildfire risk through beneficial fire, thinning, and other tools.

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LandPaths will work with the neighborhood group Friends of the Grove, other community members, and interested tribes to create an overall Public Access Plan. This plan will be the basis to open Calvi to the public. This plan will include conceptual designs for trails and visitor amenities, as well as programming elements to provide community benefits such as environmental education and activities that advance equity in the outdoors.

The proposed planning process will culminate in a County application for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to offer public access to this site and the Grove of the Old Trees.

Over its history LandPaths has been directly involved with 11 acquisition projects, all successful, protecting thousands of acres across Sonoma County.

I strongly support this grant application for funds toward the acquisition, resource enhancement, and public access planning for the Calvi Ranch

Sincerely,

Brock Dolman
OAEC Co-Founder and Program Director

11. Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Improvements **Infrastructure Implementation**

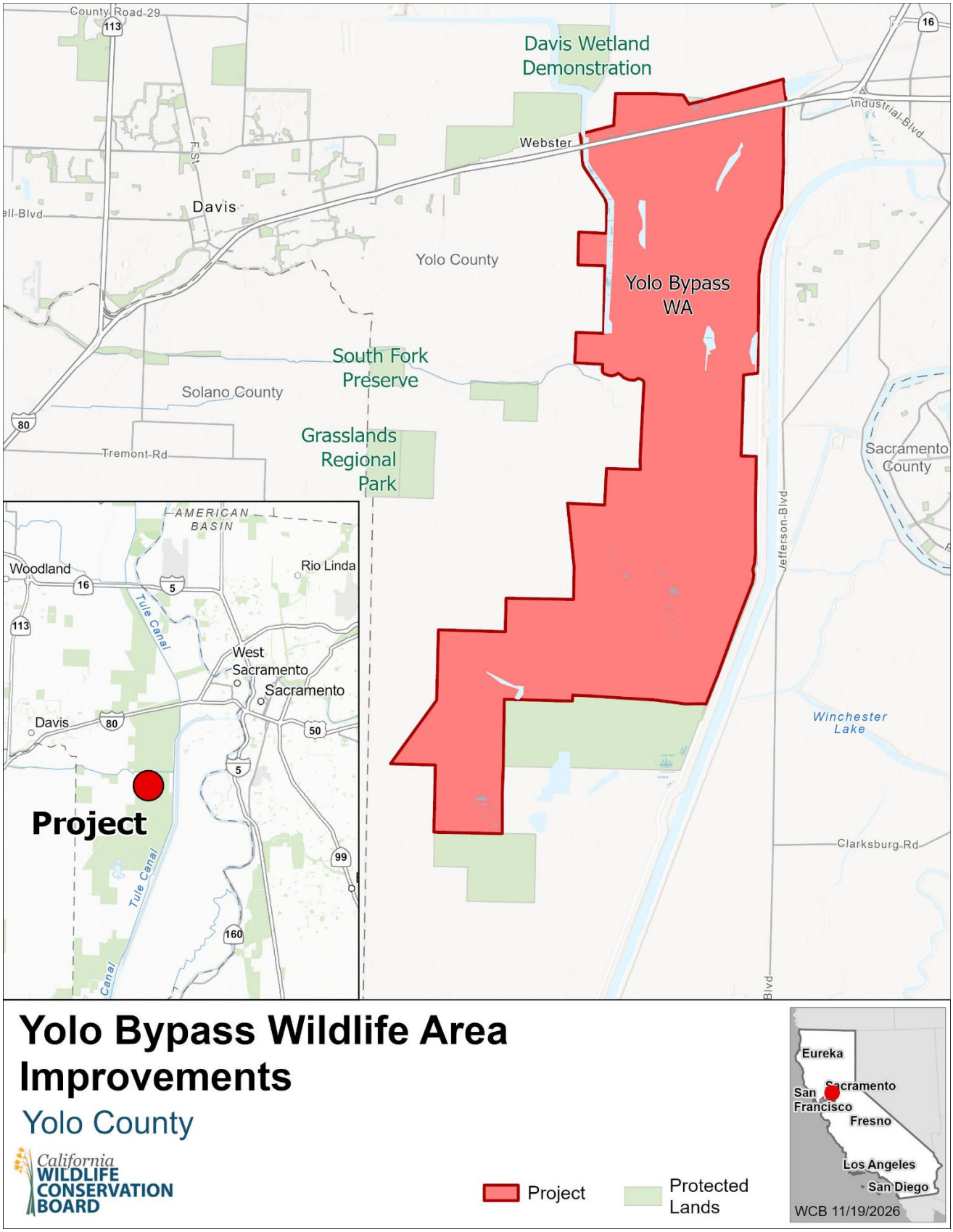
WCB Grant: $615,000
Fund Source(s): California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80111(d)
Grantee: California Waterfowl Association
Landowner: California Department of Fish and Wildlife
Location: 4 miles east of Davis
County: Yolo

Property Highlights

- Located at a highly-visited CDFW Wildlife Area between Sacramento and Davis
- Project will help accommodate increasing visitor demand, while improving safety and quality of consumptive and non-consumptive recreation
- Project includes accessibility upgrades, including a compacted gravel hiking trail and an ADA hunting blind, plus planning and permitting of two ADA-accessible viewing platforms

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: Yes, Project is near-adjacent to an SDAC and will enhance safety and accessibility for visitors
- Tribal Partnerships: Yes, the Project site is on the ancestral lands of the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation, who will provide cultural sensitivity training and monitoring during excavation activities.
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 1, Accelerate Regionally Led Conservation
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: P1.1, P2.1


County Road 29
113
Davis Wetland Demonstration
16
Industrial Blvd
Webster
Davis
Yolo County
Yolo Bypass WA
South Fork Preserve
Solano County
80
Tremont Rd
Grasslands Regional Park
Sacramento County
Jefferson Blvd
AMERICAN BASIN
Woodland
Rio Linda
16
5
113
Tule Canal
West Sacramento
Sacramento
Davis
80
50
5
Project
Winchester Lake
Clarksburg Rd
99
160
Tule Canal
Canal
Blvd
Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Improvements
Yolo County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 11/19/2026

Project Description

The Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area (YBWA) is a popular CDFW property near Sacramento used annually by over 60,000 auto tour participants, 8,000 hunters, 7,000 anglers, and thousands of public visitors for tours and events. To address growing demand while improving accessibility and recreational quality, the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Improvements (Project) will:

- Install 24 new or replacement waterfowl hunting blinds, including one ADA-accessible floating blind.
- Expand and relocate the undersized Parking Lot M, a popular access point for free roam hunting at the southern end of the YBWA. The parking lot is currently located just past a narrow ditch crossing, creating a safety hazard.
- Construct a 0.8-mile ADA-accessible hiking trail between Parking Lots B and C to improve wildlife viewing and environmental education experiences.
- Complete planning and permitting for two new ADA-accessible wildlife observation platforms.

These improvements and planning activities aim to provide equitable outdoor experiences for hunters, anglers, photographers, wildlife viewers, school groups, and visitors with disabilities.

Long-Term Management

CDFW has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the Project, including management of the YBWA. If at any time during the 20-year life of the Project's Long-Term Management Period, California Waterfowl Association 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	Totals
Project Management	$119,200	---	$119,200
Hunting Blind Installations	$166,440	$12,000	$178,440
Parking Lot M Expansion	$129,200	---	$129,200
Accessible Hiking Trail	$73,160	---	$73,160
Planning for Wildlife Observation Platforms	$50,000	---	$50,000
Indirect Costs	$77,000	---	$77,000
Total	$615,000	$12,000	$627,000

Non-WCB funders include:

- CDFW - $12,000 in-kind

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Michael Webb, Chief Administrative Officer, County of Yolo
- Heather Nichols, Executive Director, Yolo County Resource Conservation District
- Efraim Lopez, Executive Director, Yolo Basin Foundation
- Xerónimo Castañeda, Program Director, Audubon California
- Paul Miller, President, Sacramento Audubon Society
- Ann Brice and Genevieve Diane Colburn, Co-Presidents, Yolo Bird Alliance
- James Cogswell, CVJV Coordinator, Central Valley Joint Venture

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

CDFW, as lead agency, prepared a Negative Declaration for the YBWA Land Management Plan, covering the project, pursuant to the provisions of the CEQA. Staff considered the Negative Declaration 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 will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Christopher Cabaldon, District 3
- Assembly: Assemblymember Cecelia Aguiar-Curry, District 4

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the WCB adopt the written findings and approve this project as proposed, authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project, and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Improvements
Yolo County
2026075

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT FINDINGS

INTRODUCTION

The California Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) has prepared these findings to document its compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Pub. Resources Code, § 21000 *et seq*.). (See Pub. Resources Code, § 21081, and CEQA Guidelines §§ 15091, 15096 subd. (h).)[1] WCB is a responsible agency under CEQA with respect to the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Final Land Management Plan (Project) because of WCB's granting authority under the following provisions:

Authority: Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947, Chapter 4.0, Article 3 commencing with section 1300, et seq., of the California Fish and Game Code, relating to public access.
Fund Source: California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80111(d)

(See generally Pub. Resources Code, §§ 21002.1 subd. (d), 21069; CEQA Guidelines, § 15381.)

WCB makes these findings as part of its discretionary decision to award a grant, under the terms and conditions specified in Grant Agreement No. WC-2643AB (Grant Agreement), to California Waterfowl Association (Grantee) to fund the activity(ies) described below which will take place in Yolo County. WCB is a responsible agency under CEQA with respect to the Project because of prior environmental review and approval of the Project by the Lead Agency, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Lead Agency). (See generally Pub. Resources Code, § 21067; CEQA Guidelines, §15367.) The Lead Agency prepared an Initial Study considering the environmental impacts associated with implementation of the Project. The Lead Agency adopted the Negative Declaration (ND) (State Clearinghouse No. 2007072099) prepared for the Project and approved the Project on June 3, 2008. In so doing, the Lead Agency concluded that there was no substantial evidence, in light of the record as a whole, that the Project may have a significant effect on the environment.

[1] The CEQA Guidelines are found in Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, commencing with section 15000.

As approved by the Lead Agency, the Project is a Land Management Plan (LMP) for the continued operation of the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area (Wildlife Area) for protection and enhancement of habitat for wildlife species while providing the public with compatible, wildlife-related recreational uses. The LMP includes an evaluation of public uses and maintenance of related facilities that are compatible with the purpose of the Wildlife Area, including wildlife viewing and hunting.

As a responsible agency, WCB's CEQA obligations are more limited than those of a lead agency. WCB is responsible for considering only the effects of those activities that it is required by law to carry out, finance, or approve (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002.1 subd. (d); CEQA Guidelines, § 15041 subd. (b)). Accordingly, because WCB's exercise of discretion is to fund only part of the Project, WCB is responsible for considering the environmental effects that may result from that action. The parts of the Project funded by WCB are 24 new or replacement hunting blinds, accessibility upgrades to an existing hiking path, relocation and expansion of a dirt/gravel parking lot, plus design and permitting for two future ADA observation decks (WCB Project). Moreover, with respect to all other environmental effects of the Project, if any, WCB is bound by the legal presumption that the ND adopted by Lead Agency fully complies with CEQA. (See Pub. Resources Code, §§ 21080.1 subd. (a); CEQA Guidelines, § 15096 subd. (e), *City of Redding v. Shasta County Local Agency Formation Commission* (1989) 209 Cal.App.3d at pp. 1178-1181; *Laurel Heights Improvement Association v. Regents of the University of California* (1993) 6 Cal.4th 1112, 1130.)

FINDINGS: General

CEQA requires that responsible agencies must review and consider the negative declaration prepared by the lead agency, consider the environmental effects of the proposed project as shown in the negative declaration, and reach its own conclusions on whether and how to approve the project involved. (CEQA Guidelines, § 15096.)

These Findings are also intended to comply with the requirement that there is no substantial evidence in the record of proceedings (see section below) that the project may have a significant effect on the environment. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21064, CEQA Guideline, § 15070.) To that end, these findings support WCB's decision under CEQA to have: considered, within WCB's limited discretion as a responsible agency, the ND prepared by the Lead Agency; considered the environmental effects shown in the ND; and reached the conclusion to award WCB's grant and execute the Grant Agreement.

FINDINGS: Environmental Effects

In adopting the ND and approving the Project, the Lead Agency prepared an Initial Study. That Initial Study showed that there was no substantial evidence, in light of the record as a whole, that the Project may have a significant effect on the environment.

WCB has considered the ND adopted by the LA with respect to the WCB Project within the scope of its responsible agency authority. WCB, applying its independent judgment, finds that there is no evidence that its approval of the WCB Project will result in a significant effect on the environment in light of the record as a whole.

WCB further finds that allocation of a grant for the WCB Project and execution of the Grant Agreement will not result in any previously undisclosed potentially significant effects on the environment or a substantial increase in the severity of any potentially significant environmental effects previously disclosed by the Lead Agency.

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

These Findings are supported by substantial evidence in WCB's administrative record of proceedings. In general, WCB's administrative record includes the following:

1) The Lead Agency's Initial Study and ND;
2) All other public records, including public comments, made available by the Lead Agency;
3) Grant proposal (Full Application) Grantee submitted to WCB;
4) Staff reports prepared by WCB;
5) Records of the meeting at which WCB's Board approved the grant to Grantee;
6) Grant Agreement executed by WCB and Grantee;
7) All non-privileged correspondence received by WCB regarding the WCB Project;
8) All applicable statutes and regulations, including, but not limited to, those cited herein;
9) Various other documents regarding the WCB Project in WCB files; and,
10) Other relevant non-exempt or non-privileged documents described by Public Resources Code, § 21167.6, subdivision (e).

WCB is the custodian of its administrative record. The administrative record is located at 715 P Street, 17th floor, Sacramento, and all inquiries regarding the administrative record should be directed to WCB's Legal Office at (916) 445-8448.

WCB considered and relied on all of the documents listed above in exercising its independent judgment and reaching its decision with respect to the WCB Project, even if not every document was formally presented to WCB or its staff. (See *City of Santa Cruz v. Local Agency Formation Comm.* (1978) 76 Cal.App.3d 381, 391-392; *Dominey v. Department of Personnel Administration* (1988) 205 Cal.App.3d 729, 738, fn. 6.) Other documents influenced the expert advice of WCB staff, which then provided advice to the decisionmakers at WCB with respect to the grant and WCB Project. For that reason, all such documents form part of the underlying factual basis for WCB's decision related to the grant for the WCB Project. (*Browning-Ferris Industries v. City Council of City of San Jose* (1986) 181 Cal.App.3d 852, 866; *Stanislaus Audubon Society, Inc. v. County of Stanislaus* (1995) 33 Cal.App.4th 144, 153, 155.)

CONCLUSION

WCB adopts these Findings and approves the WCB Project for the purposes of CEQA.

Date:

By: _____
Title: _____

Notice of Determination

To: Office of Planning and Research
State Clearinghouse
1400 Tenth Street, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95814

County Clerk (County of): Yolo

From: **Wildlife Conservation Board**
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 99244-2090

Contact: Alyssa Benedetti
Phone: (916) 212-0691

Lead Agency: California Dept of Fish and Wildlife
Contact: Dave Feliz
Phone: (530) 757-2431

SUBJECT: Filing Notice of Determination in compliance with Section 21108 or 21152 of the Public Resources Code.

State Clearinghouse Number (If submitted by State Clearinghouse): 2007072099

Project Title: Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Final Land Management Plan

Project Location: Yolo County, between Davis and West Sacramento

CEQA Region: N. CA

Project Description:

The Project will improve infrastructure for hunting and wildlife recreation at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area, including 24 new or replacement blinds, an accessible hiking trail, and designs for two ADA observation decks. WCB Project Tracker ID: 2026075.

This is to advise that the project on 11/19/26 Wildlife Conservation Board has approved the above-described and has made the following determinations regarding the above-described project.

☐ **Lead Agency** ☑ **Responsible Agency**

1. The Project [☐ will ☑ will not] have a significant effect on the environment.
2. ☐ An environmental Impact Report was prepared for this project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.
   ☑ A Negative Declaration was prepared for this project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.
3. Mitigation Measures [☐ were ☑ were not] made a condition of WCB's approval of the project.
4. A mitigation reporting or monitoring plan [☐ was ☑ was not] adopted by WCB for this project.
5. A statement of Overriding Considerations [☐ was ☑ was not] adopted by WCB for this project.
6. Findings [☑ were ☐ were not] made by WCB pursuant to the provision of CEQA.

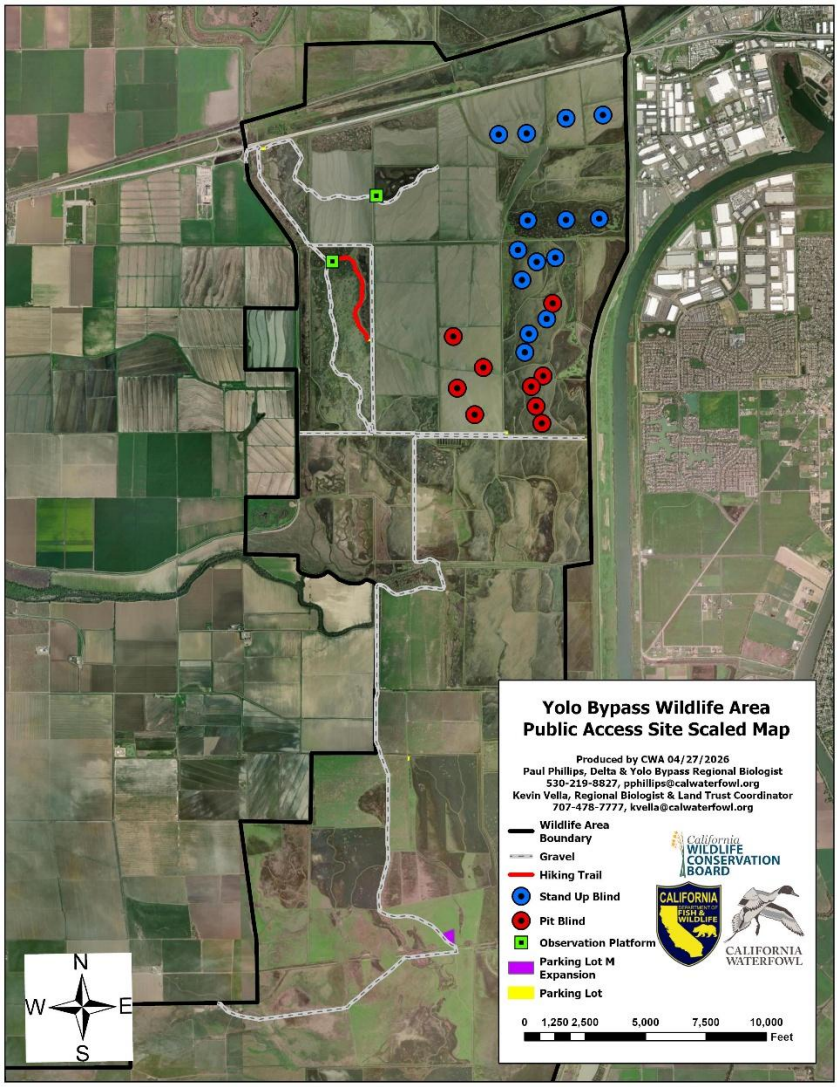
This is to certify that the Negative Declaration with comments and responses and record of the project approval is available to the General Public at: 45211 County Rd 32B, Davis, CA 95616

Signature: **Title:** Deputy Executive Director **Date:**

SCH#: 2007072099

Posted:
Date Received for Filing:

ec: WCB Project Tracker
WCB Board Meeting Folder



Map of proposed improvements to the Wildlife Area



Snow geese on the Wildlife Area

COUNTY OF YOLO

Office of the County Administrator

Michael Webb
County Administrator

625 Court Street, Room 202 • Woodland, CA 95695
Phone: (530) 666-8150
http://www.yolocounty.gov

February 20, 2026

California Wildlife Conservation Board
Attn: Jennifer Norris, Ph.D., Executive Director
P.O Box 944209
Sacramento, California 95244-2090

RE: California Waterfowl Association's Proposal for Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Enhancements in Public Access, Safety, and Recreation

Dear Ms. Norris,

The County of Yolo (County) is pleased to submit this letter in support of the California Waterfowl Association's application to the California Wildlife Conservation Board for grant funding of the proposed project that enhances road infrastructure and evacuation routes as well as additional recreational and access features to better connect the public with the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area *(Project)*.

The Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area, serves as a critical component of the Sacramento Valley and Delta ecosystem. It consists of a mosaic of managed wetlands of international importance in the heart of the Pacic Flyway, serving millions of migratory waterfowl and shorebirds each year. The 16,800-acre Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area provides critical habitat for over 200 avian species which attracts over 60,000 participants on the auto tour route annually, 8,000 hunters, 7,000 anglers, and thousands more for public events, tours, and educational programs, including schoolchildren connecting with nature through initiatives led by partners such as the Yolo Basin Foundation and California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

There is a growing need for safe, equitable, and high-quality public access to outdoor recreation and nature-based experiences across California. The proposed Project by the California Waterfowl Association directly responds to this need through a set of coordinated, well-designed improvements that enhance public safety, accessibility, and recreational opportunities within the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area.

The Project includes a comprehensive suite of infrastructure and access enhancements including:

Road infrastructure and evacuation route improvements which will involve grading and graveling approximately 17 miles of public access roads along the auto tour route and within the hunting area, allowing the Wildlife Area to remain accessible for a longer duration during the wet season when migratory birds are most abundant. This work also includes construction of a critical southern evacuation route connecting Parking Lot M to County Road 106, providing safe emergency egress during unexpected high-water events.

Installation of 25 hunting blinds, including one ADA-accessible floating blind and replacement of aging blinds that have exceeded their service life. These improvements will expand inclusive access and increase opportunities for both waterfowl and upland game hunters. In addition, the expansion and elevation of Parking Lot M using onsite fill and gravel will address existing congestion at this key southern access point, improving traffic flow, visitor safety, and accommodation of growing demand.

Construction of a 0.8-mile compacted gravel hiking trail to enhance non-consumptive recreational opportunities. This is located between Parking Lots B and C, providing equitable access for visitors of all abilities, including individuals with disabilities. This trail will support wildlife viewing, environmental education, photography, and other passive recreation.

Planning and permitting for Wildlife Observation Platforms in partnership with the Yolo County Resource Conservation District. This includes two ADA-accessible wildlife observation platforms. These facilities will address a current gap in accessible infrastructure and expand opportunities for non-consumptive recreation, including wildlife viewing, environmental education, and photography, for visitors of all abilities.

These improvements are grounded in established best practices and proven implementation methods, including GPS-guided grading, appropriate drainage design, and use of durable materials suitable for flood-prone environments, in close coordination with land managers from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. **The Project aligns closely with the California Wildlife Conservation Board Strategic Plan—specifically Goal C (Public Use and Restoration) and Strategic Initiative 3**—by expanding hunting and fishing access, enhancing facilities for mobility-impaired visitors, advancing ADA compliance, and promoting non-consumptive wildlife-oriented recreation. It also supports the State's Pathways to 30x30 initiative by improving public access to conserved state lands.

Importantly, the Project strengthens climate resilience by delivering durable infrastructure designed to withstand increasingly frequent flood conditions. California Department of Fish and Wildlife has committed to long-term maintenance of the improvements, including annual grading, gravel replenishment, and vegetation management, for 20 to 25 years or more. While the Project does not involve habitat restoration, it will sustain and enhance recreational benefits without adverse ecological impacts. The Project is shovel-ready pending funding, with construction able to begin as early as May 2026, and will provide meaningful benefits to nearby disadvantaged communities by improving safe, inclusive access to nature.

Absent funding from the Wildlife Conservation Board, these critical upgrades would not proceed, resulting in missed opportunities to improve safety, accessibility, and equitable recreation at one of California's most heavily visited wildlife areas.

We respectfully urge your support in funding this important project, which will deliver lasting benefits to the region, representing investments in responsible public access, visitor safety, and inclusive wildlife-oriented recreation on state-owned lands.

Thank you for your consideration,

Michael Webb
Chief Administrative Officer

Yolo County Resource Conservation District

221 West Court Street, Suite 1
Woodland, CA 95695

phone: (530) 661-1688
www.yolorcd.org

February 4, 2026

Jennifer Norris, Ph.D., Executive Director
Wildlife Conservation Board
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

Re: Letter of Support for California Waterfowl Association's Proposal to Enhance Public Access, Safety, and Recreation at Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area (YBWA)

Ms. Norris:
I am writing on behalf of the Yolo County Resource Conservation District, to express strong support for the grant application submitted by California Waterfowl Association (CWA) to fund critical infrastructure and accessibility improvements at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area (YBWA), a premier state-owned wildlife area managed by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW).

The YBWA, located near the state capital and bisected by Interstate 80, serves as a vital hub for wildlife-oriented recreation in the Sacramento region. It attracts over 60,000 participants on the auto tour route annually, 8,000 hunters, 7,000 anglers, and thousands more for public events, tours, and educational programs, including schoolchildren connecting with nature through initiatives like California Duck Days. As population growth and urban development intensify in the region, demand for safe, equitable, and high-quality outdoor experiences continues to rise sharply.

CWA's proposed project directly addresses pressing needs through targeted, well-planned enhancements:

1. **Road Infrastructure and Evacuation Route Improvements**: Grading and graveling 17 miles of public access roads on the auto tour route and in the hunting area, including a critical southern evacuation route from Parking Lot M to County Road 106, will ensure safe emergency egress during high-water events, allowing the area to remain accessible longer and enhancing visitor safety amid increasing flood risks associated with climate variability and projects like the Big Notch.
2. **Hunting Blind Installations**: Installing 25 new blinds (including replacements for non-functional ones) and one ADA-accessible floating blind will expand opportunities for waterfowl and upland game hunters, improving hunt quality and inclusivity.
3. **Parking Lot M Expansion**: Elevating and expanding this key southern access point with onsite fill and gravel will accommodate current and growing demand from hunters, reducing congestion and improving safety.
4. **Accessible Hiking Trail**: Constructing a 0.8-mile compacted gravel trail between Parking Lots B and C will provide equitable access for non-consumptive users, including those with disabilities, enhancing wildlife viewing, education, and photography opportunities.
5. **Planning for Wildlife Observation Platforms**: Completing permitting and planning (in partnership with the Yolo County Resource Conservation District) for two ADA-accessible platforms will fill a current gap, further promoting non-consumptive recreation.

These components are grounded in best practices, utilizing proven methods such as GPS-guided grading, proper drainage design, durable materials suited to flood-prone conditions, and coordination with CDFW

land managers. The project aligns closely with the WCB's Strategic Plan (Goal C: Public Use and Restoration; Strategic Initiative 3: Public Access and Wildlife-Oriented Recreation; Objectives SI 3.2, 3.3, and 3.4), by investing in hunting/fishing access, facilities for mobility-impaired visitors, ADA compliance, and non-consumptive wildlife recreation. It also advances the State's Pathways to 30x30 strategy (Pathway 1, Priority Action 1.8) by improving public access on conserved state lands.

Importantly, the project enhances resilience to climate change by providing enduring infrastructure that withstands more frequent flooding, while CDFW commits to long-term maintenance (e.g., annual grading, gravel addition, vegetation management) for 20–25 years or more. No habitat restoration is involved, but the improvements will sustain and elevate recreational benefits without ecological trade-offs. The project is shovel-ready pending funding, with implementation possible as early as May 2026, and benefits nearby disadvantaged communities by improving safe, inclusive access to nature.
Without WCB funding, these essential upgrades would not proceed, resulting in lost opportunities for enhanced safety, accessibility, and equitable recreation at one of California's most visited wildlife areas.

I urge the Wildlife Conservation Board to favorably consider and fund this worthwhile proposal. It represents an excellent investment in public access, visitor safety, and inclusive wildlife-oriented recreation on state-owned lands.

Thank you for your consideration. Please contact me if additional information would be helpful.

Sincerely,



Heather Nichols, Executive Director

Efraim Lopez
Executive Director
Yolo Basin Foundation
45211 County Rd. 32B
Davis, CA, 95618

February 9, 2026

Jennifer Norris, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Wildlife Conservation Board
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

Re: Letter of Support for California Waterfowl Association's Proposal to Enhance Public Access, Safety, and Recreation at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area

Dear Ms. Norris:

I am writing to express my strong support for the grant application submitted by the California Waterfowl Association (CWA) to fund critical infrastructure and accessibility improvements at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area (YBWA), a premier state-owned wildlife area managed by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), and long stewarded by the Yolo Basin Foundation (Foundation) through education and public access.

Located near the State Capitol and bisected by Interstate 80, the YBWA serves as a vital hub for wildlife-oriented recreation in the Sacramento region. The area attracts more than 60,000 visitors annually on the auto tour route, approximately 8,000 hunters, 7,000 anglers, and thousands more participants in public events, guided tours, and educational programs. As a long-standing steward of the YBWA, the Foundation has invested significantly in facilities, infrastructure, and programming that enable safe and meaningful public access, including a recently completed $2.6 million capital improvement project that directly supports education programs such as the Discover the Flyway field trip program.

Through its Discover the Flyway education program, the Foundation brings approximately 3,000 school-aged children to the YBWA each year. These students explore the wetland ecosystem and learn about its wildlife while relying on safe infrastructure to support program activities, such as demonstration ponds. Families and students often hike along the very routes proposed for improvement; however, deteriorating road conditions and the constant need for maintenance currently limit access, restrict outdoor learning opportunities, and potentially present safety concerns.

In addition, the Foundation hosts up to 5,000 people annually for its Bat Talk and Tour, where participants learn about the founding of the wildlife area, its benefits to aquatic and avian species, and the ecological role of the large bat colonies that inhabit the site. Attendees gain a deeper understanding of ecosystem services, including vector control provided by bats, which contributes to public health, while experiencing the wildlife area firsthand.

The YBWA is a strong example of a multi-use public space that serves diverse audiences. With the volume of potential visitors at any given time; including children on field trips, families attending events such as the Duck Days Festival, recreational users, hunters, and anglers. Reliable access infrastructure and a functional evacuation route are essential to ensuring public safety.

Viewing platforms included in this proposal would provide designated spaces for Foundation docents, volunteers, and the general public to gather, learn, and appreciate the full scope and beauty of the wildlife area. Accessible trails and overlooks will enhance educational programming and allow visitors of all abilities to experience the ecosystem up close.

CWA's proposed project directly addresses these needs through a series of targeted and well-planned enhancements, backed by a CDFW commitment to long-term maintenance for a period of 20 to 25 years or more including:

1. **Road Infrastructure and Evacuation Route Improvements:** Grading and graveling approximately 17 miles of public access roads along the auto tour route and within the hunting area, including a critical southern evacuation route from Parking Lot M to County Road 106.
2. **Hunting Blind Installations:** Installation of 25 new hunting blinds, including replacements for non-functional structures, as well as one ADA-accessible floating blind.
3. **Parking Lot M Expansion:** Elevation and expansion of this key southern access point using onsite fill and gravel to accommodate current and growing demand from hunters, reduce congestion, and improve public safety.
4. **Accessible Hiking Trail:** Construction of a 0.8-mile compacted gravel trail connecting Parking Lots B and C to provide equitable access for non-consumptive users, including individuals with disabilities.
5. **Planning for Wildlife Observation Platforms:** Completion of permitting and planning, in partnership with the Yolo County Resource Conservation District, for two ADA-accessible wildlife observation platforms.

The proposal aligns closely with the Wildlife Conservation Board's Strategic Plan—specifically Goal C (Public Use and Restoration), Strategic Initiative 3 (Public Access and Wildlife-Oriented Recreation), and Objectives SI 3.2, 3.3, and 3.4—and advances the State's Pathways to 30x30 strategy by improving public access to conserved state lands.

Without funding from the Wildlife Conservation Board, these essential upgrades would not proceed, resulting in lost opportunities to enhance education opportunities, safety, accessibility, and equitable recreation at one of California's most heavily visited wildlife areas.

I strongly urge the Wildlife Conservation Board to favorably consider and fund this worthwhile proposal. It represents an excellent investment in public access, visitor safety, and inclusive wildlife-oriented recreation on state-owned lands.

Thank you for your consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact me if additional information would be helpful.

Sincerely,



Efraim Lopez
Executive Director
Yolo Basin Foundation
Elopez@yolobasin.org

Audubon | CALIFORNIA

1901 Harrison Street
Suite 1450
Oakland, CA 94612

415.644.4600
ca.audubon.org

Jennifer Norris, Ph.D., Executive Director
Wildlife Conservation Board
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

Re: Letter of Support for California Waterfowl Association's Proposal to Enhance Public Access, Safety, and Recreation at Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area (YBWA)

Ms. Norris:

I am writing to express strong support for the grant application submitted by California Waterfowl Association (CWA) to fund critical infrastructure and accessibility improvements at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area (YBWA), a premier state-owned wildlife area managed by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). The YBWA, located near the state capitol and bisected by Interstate 80, serves as a vital hub for wildlife-oriented recreation in the Sacramento region. It attracts over 60,000 participants on the auto tour route annually, is the 17th most visited birding area in California, hosts 8,000 hunters, 7,000 anglers, and thousands more for public events, tours, and educational programs, including schoolchildren connecting with nature through initiatives like California Duck Days. As population growth and urban development intensify in the region, demand for safe, equitable, and high-quality outdoor experiences continues to rise sharply.

CWA's proposed project directly addresses pressing needs through targeted, well-planned enhancements:

- **Road Infrastructure and Evacuation Route Improvements**: Grading and graveling 17 miles of public access roads on the auto tour route and in the hunting area, including a critical southern evacuation route from Parking Lot M to County Road 106, will ensure safe emergency egress during high-water events, allowing the area to remain accessible longer and enhancing visitor safety amid increasing flood risks associated with climate variability and projects like the Big Notch.

- **Hunting Blind Installations**: Installing 25 new blinds (including replacements for non-functional ones) and one ADA-accessible floating blind will expand opportunities for waterfowl and upland game hunters, improving hunt quality and inclusivity.

- **Parking Lot M Expansion**: Elevating and expanding this key southern access point with onsite fill and gravel will accommodate current and growing demand from hunters, reducing congestion and improving safety.

- **Accessible Hiking Trail**: Constructing a 0.8-mile compacted gravel trail between Parking Lots B and C will provide equitable access for non-consumptive users, including those with disabilities, enhancing wildlife viewing, education, and photography opportunities.

- **Planning for Wildlife Observation Platforms**: Completing permitting and planning (in partnership with the Yolo County Resource Conservation District) for two ADA-accessible platforms will fill a current gap, further promoting non-consumptive recreation.

These components are grounded in best practices, utilizing proven methods such as GPS-guided grading, proper drainage design, durable materials suited to flood-prone conditions, and coordination with CDFW land managers. The project aligns closely with the WCB's Strategic Plan (Goal C: Public Use and Restoration; Strategic Initiative 3: Public Access and Wildlife-Oriented Recreation; Objectives SI 3.2, 3.3, and 3.4), by investing in hunting/fishing access, facilities for mobility-impaired visitors, ADA compliance, and non-

consumptive wildlife recreation. It also advances the State's Pathways to 30x30 strategy (Pathway 1, Priority Action 1.8) by improving public access on conserved state lands. Public access is a top priority for Audubon.

Importantly, the project enhances resilience to climate change by providing enduring infrastructure that withstands more frequent flooding, while CDFW commits to long-term maintenance (e.g., annual grading, gravel addition, vegetation management) for 20–25 years or more. No habitat restoration is involved, but the improvements will sustain and elevate recreational benefits without ecological trade-offs. The project is shovel-ready pending funding, with implementation possible as early as May 2026, and benefits nearby disadvantaged communities by improving safe, inclusive access to nature.

Without WCB funding, these essential upgrades would not proceed, resulting in lost opportunities for enhanced safety, accessibility, and equitable recreation at one of California's most visited wildlife areas.
I urge the Wildlife Conservation Board to favorably consider and fund this worthwhile proposal. It represents an excellent investment in public access, visitor safety, and inclusive wildlife-oriented recreation on state-owned lands.

Thank you for your consideration. Please contact me if additional information would be helpful.

Sincerely,



Xerónimo Castañeda
Program Director, Working Lands
Audubon California
Xeronimo.castaneda@audubon.org

SACRAMENTO
AUDUBON SOCIETY

February 6, 2026

RE: Support of Proposed Improvements Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area

To Whom It May Concern,

The Sacramento Audubon Society is in full support of the proposed improvements to the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area. This facility is heavily used by our members year around. We understand the improvements to include:

1. **Road Infrastructure and Evacuation Route Improvements**: Grading and graveling 17 miles of public access roads on the auto tour route and in the hunting area, including a critical southern evacuation route from Parking Lot M to County Road 106, will ensure safe emergency egress during high-water events, allowing the area to remain accessible longer and enhancing visitor safety amid increasing flood risks associated with climate variability and projects like the Big Notch.
2. **Hunting Blind Installations**: Installing 25 new blinds (including replacements for non-functional ones) and one ADA-accessible floating blind will expand opportunities for waterfowl and upland game hunters, improving hunt quality and inclusivity.
3. **Parking Lot M Expansion**: Elevating and expanding this key southern access point with onsite fill and gravel will accommodate current and growing demand from hunters, reducing congestion and improving safety.
4. **Accessible Hiking Trail**: Constructing a 0.8-mile compacted gravel trail between Parking Lots B and C will provide equitable access for non-consumptive users, including those with disabilities, enhancing wildlife viewing, education, and photography opportunities.
5. **Planning for Wildlife Observation Platforms**: Completing permitting and planning (in partnership with the Yolo County Resource Conservation District) for two ADA-accessible platforms will fill a current gap, further promoting non-consumptive recreation.

Sincerely,

Paul Miller, President

Sacramento Audubon Society

February 16, 2026

Jennifer Norris, Ph.D., Executive Director
Wildlife Conservation Board
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

RE: Yolo Bird Alliance Letter of Support for California Waterfowl Association's Proposed Improvements at Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area

Dear Executive Director Norris,

The Yolo Bird Alliance is in full support of the grant application submitted by the California Waterfowl Association to fund specified infrastructure and accessibility improvements to the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area (YBWA). The YBWA is extensively used by our members throughout the year for birding and other non-consumptive uses. The Yolo Bird Alliance is also a sponsor of the California Duck Days festival that introduces hundreds of children and families to the wildlife area every year. The refuge is one of the premier birding locations in Yolo County and provides critical habitat for waterfowl, shorebirds, and other wildlife. We understand the improvements proposed to be funded by the grant include:

1. Road Infrastructure and Evacuation Route Improvements: Grading and graveling 17 miles of public access roads on the auto tour route and in the hunting area, including a critical southern evacuation route from Parking Lot M to County Road 106, will ensure safe emergency egress during high-water events, allowing the area to remain accessible longer and enhancing visitor safety amid increasing flood risks associated with climate variability and projects like the Big Notch.

2. Hunting Blind Installations: Installing 25 new blinds (including replacements for non-functional ones) and one ADA-accessible floating blind will expand opportunities for waterfowl and upland game hunters, improving hunt quality and inclusivity.

3. Parking Lot M Expansion: Elevating and expanding this key southern access point with onsite fill and gravel will accommodate current and growing demand from hunters, reducing congestion and improving safety.

4. Accessible Hiking Trail: Constructing a 0.8-mile compacted gravel trail between Parking Lots B and C will provide equitable access for non-consumptive users, including those with disabilities, enhancing wildlife viewing, education, and photography opportunities.

5. Planning for Wildlife Observation Platforms: Completing permitting and planning (in partnership with the Yolo County Resource Conservation District) for two ADA-accessible platforms will fill a current gap, further promoting non-consumptive recreation.

These improvements will provide enhanced accessibility for multiple public uses, while also improving public safety. YBA urges the WCB to favorably consider and fund this worthwhile project. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Ann Brice and Genevieve Diane Colborn, Co-Presidents
Yolo Bird Alliance (formerly Yolo Audubon Society)

cc: Garrett Spaan, YBWA

CENTRAL VALLEY JOINT VENTURE

Conserving Bird Habitat in California's Central Valley

2800 Cottage Way, W1916
Sacramento, CA 95825
(279) 202-4098
www.cvjv.org

Jennifer Norris, Ph.D., Executive Director
Wildlife Conservation Board
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

Re: Letter of Support for California Waterfowl Association's Proposal to Enhance Public Access, Safety, and Recreation at Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area (YBWA)

Ms. Norris:

I am writing to express the Central Valley Joint Venture's (CVJV) strong support for the grant application submitted by California Waterfowl Association (CWA) to fund critical infrastructure and accessibility improvements at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area (YBWA), a premier state-owned wildlife area managed by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW).

The CVJV is a partnership of 20 public and private entities comprised of government agencies, science and conservation organizations, and one regulated utility provider. Our mission is to work collaboratively to protect, restore, and enhance habitats for birds, in accordance with conservation actions identified in the 2020 CVJV Implementation Plan (Plan). This Plan provides a cohesive vision for bird conservation in the Central Valley within the context of the entire Pacific Flyway and sets quantitative habitat objectives based on best available science to ensure sustainable populations of migrant and resident birds in California's Central Valley. In addition to habitat objectives, the Plan sets goals and priorities to address human dimensions including outdoor recreation, environmental education and multiple benefit projects that conserve bird populations and help meet the needs of people.

The YBWA, located near the state capitol and bisected by Interstate 80, serves as a vital hub for wildlife-oriented recreation in the Sacramento region. It annually attracts over 60,000 wildlife enthusiasts on the auto tour route, 8,000 hunters, 7,000 anglers, and thousands more for public events, tours, and environmental educational programs, including schoolchildren connecting with nature through initiatives like California Duck Days. As population growth and urban development intensify in the region, the demand for safe, high-quality outdoor experiences continues to rise sharply.

CWA's proposed project directly addresses pressing needs through targeted, well-planned enhancements:

1. **Road Infrastructure and Evacuation Route Improvements**: Grading and graveling 17 miles of public access roads on the auto tour route and in the hunting area, including a critical southern evacuation route from Parking Lot M to County Road 106, will ensure safe emergency egress during high-water

events, allowing the area to remain accessible longer and enhancing visitor safety amid increasing flood risks associated with climate variability and projects like the Big Notch.

2. **Hunting Blind Installations**: Installing 25 new blinds (including replacements for non-functional ones) and one ADA-accessible floating blind will expand opportunities for waterfowl and upland game hunters, improving hunt quality and inclusivity.

3. **Parking Lot M Expansion**: Elevating and expanding this key southern access point with onsite fill and gravel will accommodate current and growing demand from hunters, reducing congestion and improving safety.

4. **Accessible Hiking Trail**: Constructing a 0.8-mile compacted gravel trail between Parking Lots B and C will provide access for wildlife enthusiasts, including those with disabilities, enhancing wildlife viewing, photography and education opportunities.

5. **Planning for Wildlife Observation Platforms**: Completing permitting and planning (in partnership with the Yolo County Resource Conservation District) for two ADA-accessible platforms will fill a current gap, further promoting wildlife observation, wildlife photography and environmental education.

These components are grounded in best practices, utilizing proven methods such as GPS-guided grading, proper drainage design, durable materials suited to flood-prone conditions, and coordination with CDFW land managers. The project aligns closely with the WCB's Strategic Plan (Goal C: Public Use and Restoration; Strategic Initiative 3: Public Access and Wildlife-Oriented Recreation; Objectives SI 3.2, 3.3, and 3.4), by investing in hunting/fishing access, facilities for mobility-impaired visitors, ADA compliance, and non-consumptive wildlife recreation. It also advances the State's Pathways to 30x30 strategy (Pathway 1, Priority Action 1.8) by improving public access on conserved state lands.

Importantly, the project enhances resilience to climate change by providing enduring infrastructure that withstands more frequent and intense flooding, while CDFW commits to long-term maintenance (e.g., annual grading, gravel addition, vegetation management) for 20–25 years or more. No habitat restoration is involved, but the improvements will sustain and elevate recreational benefits, help garner public support for wildlife conservation, and provide the local community with safe and inclusive access to nature. The project is shovel-ready, with implementation possible as early as May 2026.

We urge the Wildlife Conservation Board to favorably consider and fund this worthwhile proposal. It represents an excellent investment in public access, visitor safety, and wildlife-oriented recreation on state-owned lands.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

JAMES COGSWELL

Digitally signed by JAMES COGSWELL
Date: 2026.03.24 15:43:09 -07'00'

James Cogswell

CVJV Coordinator

cc: Central Valley Joint Venture Board

12. Indian Joe Springs Ecological Reserve Easement Exchange **Acquisition Easement**

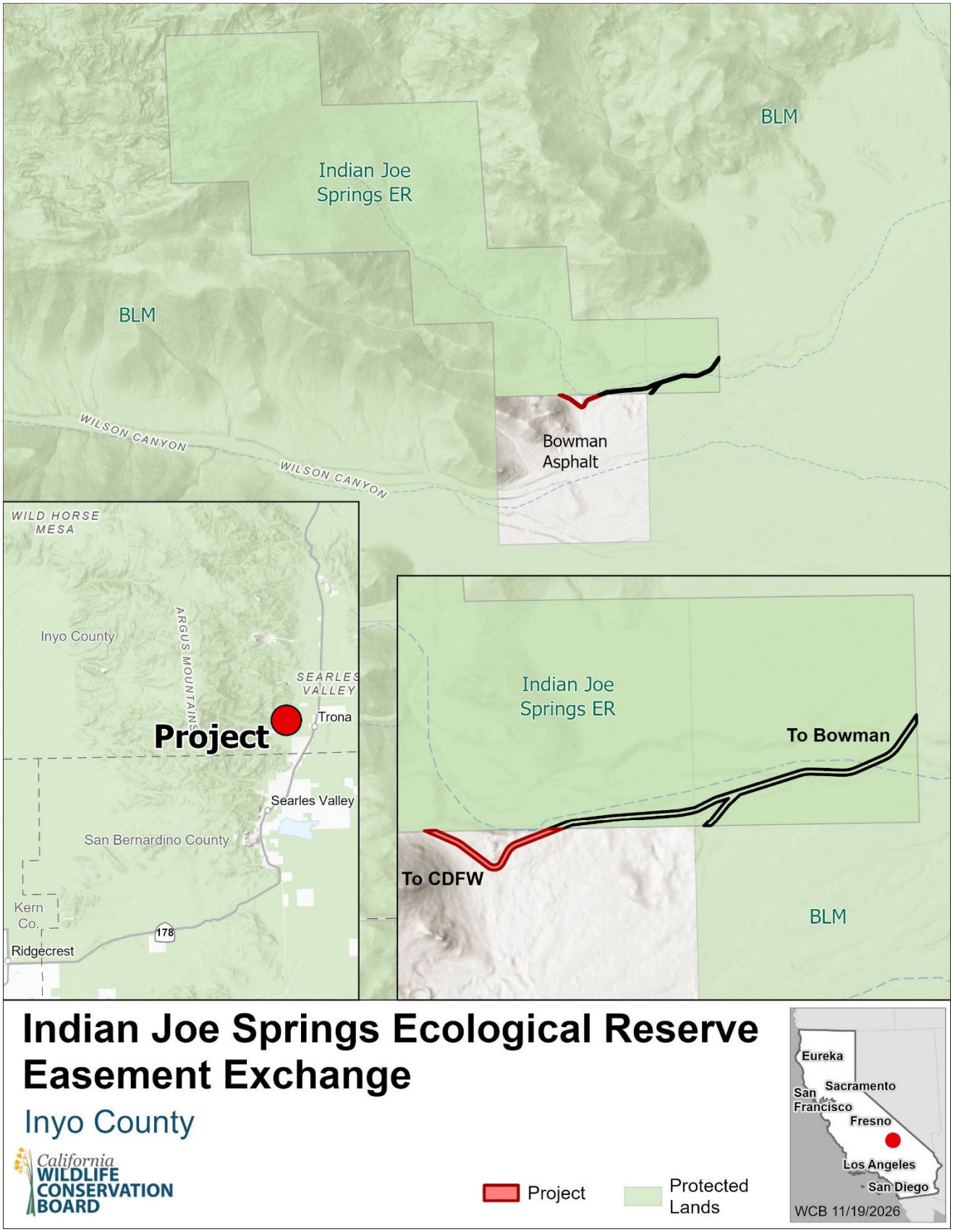
Purchase Price: $0
Fund Source(s): N/A
Location: Exchange easements are located near the community of Trona
County: Inyo
Acres: 1± (Easement granted to CDFW) and 2± (CDFW granted Easement)

Project Highlights

- CDFW proposes to acquire an access easement from adjacent property owner, Bowman Asphalt, Inc. (Bowman), to improve CDFW access to the Indian Joe Springs Ecological Reserve (IJSER).
- In exchange, CDFW will grant an access easement of 1.72± acres to Bowman over an existing road located primarily on the recently acquired IJSER, Expansion 1 property that was approved at WCB's November 2025 Board meeting.
- This exchange of easements will grant each party respective legal access on paths traveled by both parties over the years.
- Acquisition of the Easement improves CDFW access to IJSER for scientific surveys and maintenance purposes and supports IJSER's protection of critical desert habitats for the Inyo California towhee, Desert tortoise, and Mohave ground squirrel.

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: Yes, the Easement is located within a Severely Disadvantaged Community as determined by DWR's DAC mapping tool.
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Acquisitions and Pathway 4, Enhance Conservation of Existing Lands
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B1.1
- Public Access: No


BLM
Indian Joe Springs ER
BLM
WILSON CANYON
WILSON CANYON
Bowman Asphalt
WILD HORSE MESA
Inyo County
ARGUS MOUNTAINS
SEARLES VALLEY
Trona
Project
Searles Valley
San Bernardino County
Kern Co.
178
Ridgecrest
Indian Joe Springs ER
To Bowman
To CDFW
BLM
Indian Joe Springs Ecological Reserve Easement Exchange
Inyo County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 11/19/2026

Long-Term Management
CDFW will manage the Easement as part of the IJSER.

Project Funding
There will be no cash payment by State to Bowman or Bowman to State associated with the exchange. The easements have nominal value and Bowman will commit to installing a gate that benefits both the State and Bowman. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	$0
TOTAL Purchase Price	$0

Letters of Support or Opposition
Support:
- None received

Opposition:
- None received

CEQA
The project has been reviewed for compliance with CEQA requirements and is proposed as exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15301, Existing Facilities, as operation and maintenance of existing public or private facilities involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use. Subject to Board approval of the project, staff will file the appropriate NOE with the State Clearinghouse.

State Government
- Senate: Senator Marie Alvarado-Gil, District 4
- Assembly: Assemblymember David J. Tangipa, District 8

Staff Recommendation
Staff recommends that the WCB approve this project as proposed, authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project, and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.



Road path on Bowman Asphalt property continues from upper right (east), dips below structures and continues northwestward to Indian Joe Springs Ecological Reserve.



View of the entrance road on CDFW property, facing east.

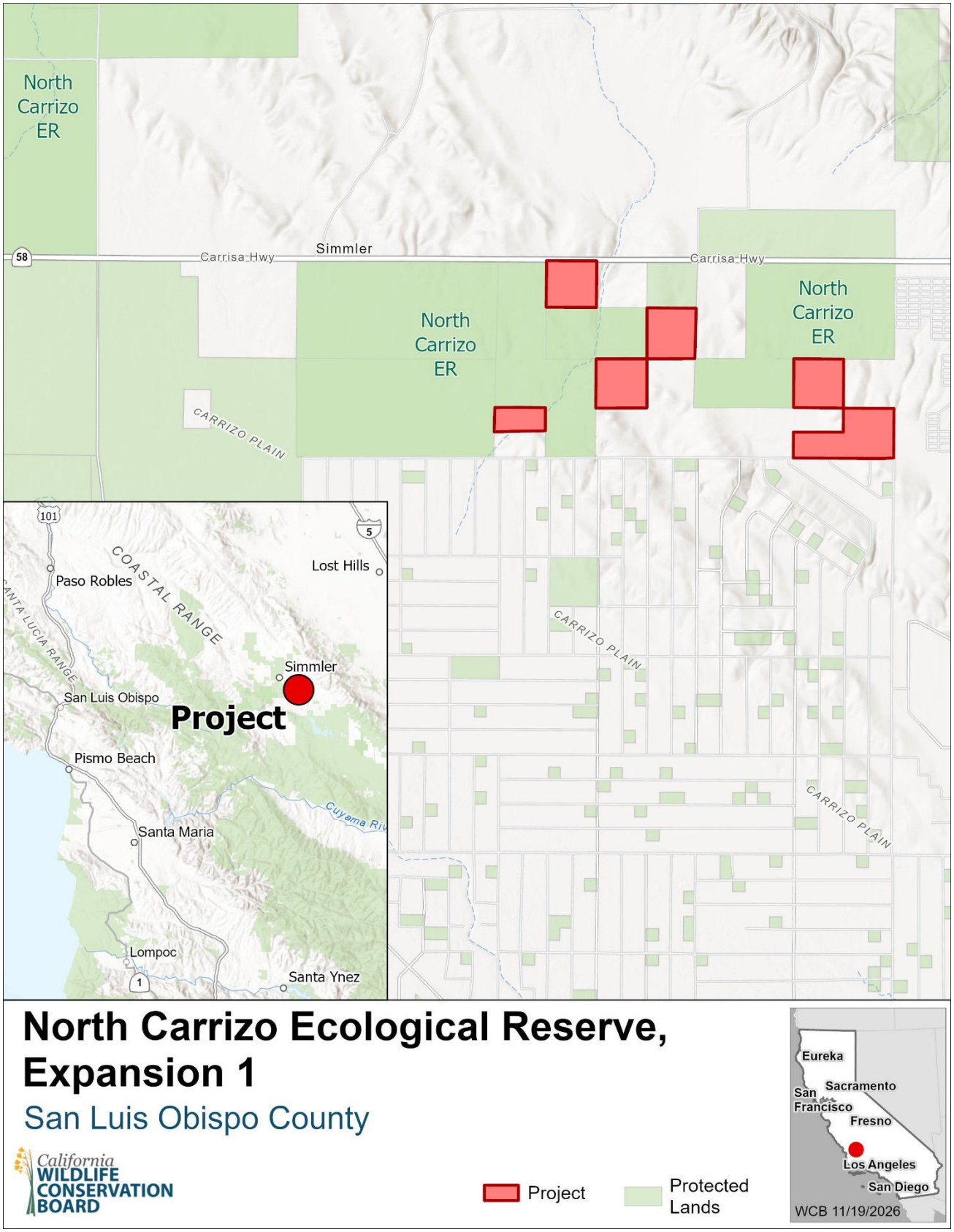
13. North Carrizo Ecological Reserve, Expansion 1 **Acquisition**
Purchase Price: $5,000 **CDFW Fee**
Fund Source(s): Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c)
Location: 36 miles east of Santa Maria
County: San Luis Obispo
Acres: 240± (Property)

Property Highlights

- Habitats represented: annual grassland, saltbush scrub, and vernal pool.
- Key species: San Joaquin kit fox, pronghorn antelope, burrowing owl, vernal pool fairy shrimp, and giant kangaroo rat.
- The parcels have been acquired over several years by the Carrizo Plain Conservancy and will be transferred to the Department of Fish and Wildlife for ownership and management at a discounted purchase price.
- The project will provide an additional 240 acres to the greater 12,887-acre North Carrizo Ecological Reserve.
- Project provides habitat connectivity between the federal land within the Los Padres National Forest, conserved lands in the northern Carrizo Plain, and the Carrizo Plain National Monument.

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Acquisitions
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B1.1, B2.1
- Public Access: No


North Carrizo ER
Simmler
58
Carrisa Hwy
Carrisa Hwy
North Carrizo ER
North Carrizo ER
CARRIZO PLAIN
CARRIZO PLAIN
CARRIZO PLAIN
101
5
Paso Robles
COASTAL RANGE
Lost Hills
SANTA LUCIA RANGE
Simmler
San Luis Obispo
Project
Pismo Beach
Cuyama Riv
Santa Maria
Lompoc
1
Santa Ynez
North Carrizo Ecological Reserve, Expansion 1
San Luis Obispo County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 11/19/2026

Long-Term Management

The property will be owned and managed by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife as part of the 12,887-acre North Carrizo Ecological Reserve, which is managed to protect rare, threatened and endangered plants and animals and the important ecological communities found within and adjacent to the Carrizo Plain in southeastern San Luis Obispo County.

Project Funding

The Department of General Services approved fair market value is $550,000, and the landowner has agreed to sell at a reduced price of $5,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	$5,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	$5,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- None received

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

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.

State Government

- Senate: Senator John Laird, District 17
- Assembly: Assemblymember Dawn Addis, District 30

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the WCB approve this project as proposed, authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project, and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned



Photo of grassland on property. Photo Credit: WCB

1

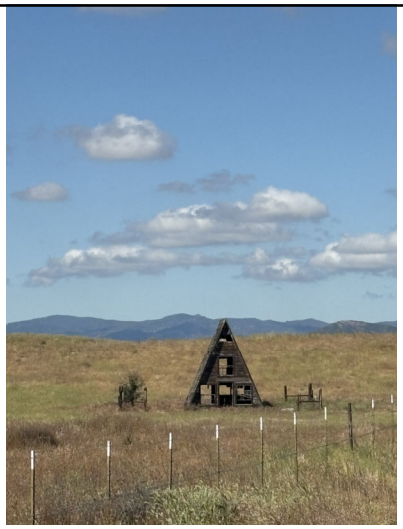


Photo of property. Photo Credit: WCB

2

14. Del Dios **Acquisition**
WCB Grant: $423,600 **Fee**
Fund Source(s): Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024 (Proposition 4 – Existing Programs), Public Resources Code Section 93010 (SB 105, Sec. 94)
Grantee: San Dieguito River Valley Land Conservancy
Location: Five miles southwest of the city of Escondido
County: San Diego
Acres: 59± (Property)

Property Highlights

- Habitats represented: coastal sage scrub, chapparal, ruderal woodland
- Key species: coastal California gnatcatcher, *Encinitas baccharis*
- Regional or Species Plan: San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Plan
- Project strengthens regional wildlife corridors between Lake Hodges and surrounding preserves

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Acquisitions
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B1.1, B2.1, C2.2
- Public Access: No


Elfin Forest Recreational Reserve
Olivenhain Dam
Del Dios Highlands Preserve
Del Dios Rd
Hodges Reservoir Open Space
The Keithley Preserve
Olivenhain Dam
Escondido Creek
Del Dios
Del Dios Open Space Preserve
Lake Hodges
Del Dios Rd
San Dieguito River Park
15
76
78
5
56
Oceanside
Vista
Carlsbad
San Marcos
Escondido
Del Dios
Encinitas
Project
Pacific Ocean
Del Mar
OAT HILLS
Del Dios
San Diego County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
WCB 11/19/2026

Long-Term Management

Upon acquisition, the Property will be managed as an expansion of the existing 117-acre Del Dios Open Space Preserve and incorporated into the preserve's established Resource Management Plan. Management activities will focus on habitat conservation and stewardship, including monitoring, invasive species control, ecological restoration as needed, and scientific or educational stewardship activities consistent with conservation goals.

Project Funding

The Department of General Services approved fair market value is $1,059,000 and the landowner has agreed to sell at a reduced price of $423,600. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	$423,600
TOTAL Purchase Price	$423,600

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Shawna Anderson, Executive Director, San Dieguito River Park Joint Powers Authority
- Bob Byrnes and Arne Johanson, Co-Chairs, California Native Plant Society San Diego Chapter
- Candice Bowman, Vice President, Friends of the San Dieguito River Valley
- Clayton Tschudy, Executive Director and CEO, San Diego Canyonlands
- Eric Jones, President and Executive Director, Volcan Mountain Foundation

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

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.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Brian W. Jones, District 40
- Assembly: Assemblymember Dr. Darshana R. Patel, District 76

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the WCB approve this project as proposed, authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project, and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.



View facing southeast from the top of the Property with Lake Hodges below.



View facing west from the top of the Property.

San Dieguito River Park
Joint Powers Authority
18372 Sycamore Creek Road
Escondido, CA 92025
(858) 674-2270 Fax (858) 674-2280
www.sdrp.org

March 24, 2026

Wildlife Conservation Board
715 P Street, 17th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB):

The San Dieguito River Park Joint Powers Authority (JPA) is pleased to support the San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy's (SDRVC) application for acquiring the Del Dios Preserve property.

The JPA has a 37-year relationship with SDRVC and has worked extensively with SDRVC to restore native habitat along the San Dieguito River riparian corridor and broader watershed. As part of this work, the JPA recognizes that the Del Dios Preserve presents a significant opportunity considering that the parcel is within the JPA's focused planning area and Coast to Crest Trail viewshed, the potential for restoring threatened and endangered species and their habitat, and the parcel's adjacency to existing habitat preserves. The acquisition project would add an additional 58 acres to the 117 acres that SDRVC has owned since 2021 and is a continuation of environmental stewardship efforts in the project area, especially the adjacent JPA-owned East Gorge habitat management area. SDRVC's proposed acquisition would add to the expanding inventory of protected lands and improve access to natural spaces for the public. If the acquisition is successful, the JPA believes that SDRVC will enhance the ecological integrity of the San Dieguito River within this area, reducing fire risk, improving water quality, and supporting native habitat for threatened and endangered species.

Thank you for the opportunity to express our support for this project. We strongly urge you to approve SDRVC's proposed land acquisition.

Sincerely,

Shawna Anderson
Executive Director

Wildlife Conservation Board
715 P Street, 17th Floor,
Sacramento, CA 95814

March 11, 2026

Dear WCB,

We fully support the San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy's acquisition of an additional 58.85 acres in the Del Dios area near Lake Hodges.

The SDRVC has been our partner for over a decade. Our California Native Plant Society-San Diego's restoration team continues to do restoration and weed control projects in many parts of the river valley. Our CNPS-SD botanists have conducted plant surveys on nearby existing SDRVC Del Dios open space.

We know there are sensitive habitats on the Conservancy's existing parcel with listed plant species, with high potential for others. The known special status species include: *Baccharis vanessae*, *Ceanothus verucosus*, *Chamaebatia australis*, and *Sellaginella cineaste*. We would expect to find similar plant communities on the adjacent land.

Further, the adjacent lands are in an important wildlife corridor to the Elfin Forest preserved lands. These habitats support wildlife such as California gnatcatcher and mountain lion. The presence of these speaks to the health of the coastal sage scrub and chaparral ecosystem is worth preserving.

Because the San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy is known to be an excellent steward and partner, and because we know these additional lands are valuable for plants and

wildlife, we certainly support the effort by the SDRVC to acquire the 58.85 acres of native habitat adjacent to their current reserve.

Sincerily,

Bob Byrnes and Arne Johanson
Co-chairs, Restoration CNPS San Diego
habitatrestoration@cnpssd.org
CNPS San Diego Chapter | San Diego Natural History Museum | P.O. Box 121390 | San Diego, CA 92112-1390

October 9, 2026

Wildlife Conservation Board

P.O. Box 944209, Sacramento, California 94244-2090

Attn: Executive Director

Phone: (916) 445-8448

Email: wcb@wildlife.ca.gov

Board of Directors

Jeff Carmel
President

Candice Bowman
Vice President

Bill Farrell
Treasurer

Kristina Leyva

Polly Wheatley

To whom it may concern,

The Friends of the San Dieguito River Valley, established in 1986 as a 501(c)(4) non-profit, promotes and supports conservation, restoration, preservation and enhancement of the natural scenic, ecological and open-space resources of the River Valley. Advocacy through activism forms the core of our work.

Consistent with our mission, we would like to take this opportunity to give our wholehearted support for the San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy's acquisition of a 58.85-acre parcel of land adjacent to the Del Dios Open Space Preserve near Lake Hodges. Due to the steep nature of this property and its proximity to the River Valley, we believe that it provides critical drainage and habitat for the biota in this region.

Please accept our full support for this essential addition to the San Dieguito River Valley system.

Sincerely,

Candice Bowman (for the Board)
Vice President
Friends of the San Dieguito River Valley

SAN DIEGO CANYONLANDS
5106 FEDERAL BLVD, SUITE 205
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA, 92105

March 11, 2026

Wildlife Conservation Board
1416 9th Street, Suite 1266
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Letter of Support – San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy WCB Acquisition of Del Dios Open Space Preserve Expansion

Dear Members of the Wildlife Conservation Board,

On behalf of San Diego Canyonlands, I am pleased to offer our enthusiastic support for the San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy's (Conservancy) application to the Wildlife Conservation Board to acquire 58.85 acres of native habitat adjacent to the Del Dios Open Space Preserve near Lake Hodges. San Diego Canyonlands and the Conservancy share a long-standing and deeply collaborative partnership rooted in a shared mission to protect, restore, and connect critical open spaces across the San Diego region. Together, we have engaged in large-scale conservation and restoration initiatives, including coordinated habitat restoration, wildfire resilience, and community engagement projects, that reflect our mutual commitment to safeguarding the region's biodiversity and natural heritage. This relationship has been built on trust, shared expertise, and a proven track record of delivering meaningful conservation outcomes.

The proposed acquisition represents a compelling conservation opportunity with significant regional benefits. Expanding the existing 117-acre Del Dios Open Space Preserve by an additional 58.85 acres will strengthen a vital wildlife movement corridor, protect sensitive coastal sage scrub habitat, and support a suite of listed species including coastal California gnatcatcher, mountain lion, and more. This type of project that targets connectivity and multi-species conservation is exactly the work that is needed to ensure the long-term ecological resilience of the San Dieguito River Valley, and it is consistent with regional conservation plans and priorities.

San Diego Canyonlands has the utmost confidence in the San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy's ability to acquire and steward this land to the highest standard. Their team brings exceptional expertise in land management, stakeholder engagement, and habitat enhancement, and has consistently demonstrated responsible, science-based stewardship of the lands in their care. We strongly urge the Wildlife Conservation Board to support this application and invest in the protection of this irreplaceable landscape.

Sincerely,

Clayton Tschudy

Executive Director and CEO

San Diego Canyonlands

SAN DIEGO CANYONLANDS
PROMOTE. PROTECT. RESTORE

Volcan Mountain
FOUNDATION

PO Box 1625
2015 Main St, Suite C
Julian, CA 92036
(760) 765-2300
VolcanMt.org
info@VolcanMt.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Michael Beck
Vicki Bergstrom
Adryenn Cantor
Jay Evarts
Chris Girod
Diedre Girod
Jeffrey L. Lincer, Ph.D.
Richard Louv
John Lovio
Toni Marquette
Sharyl Massey
Susan Meyer
Cody Petterson, Ph.D.
David Rubenson, MD
Greg Schuett
Bryan Tran

AMBASSADORS CIRCLE
Diane Coombs
Cynthia Hedgecock
Richard Louv
Dagmar Midcap
Pat Straube
David Van Cleve
Emily Young, Ph.D.
David Younkman

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Eric Jones

501(c)(3) Nonprofit
Tax Exemption #33-0329894

March 4, 2026

Wildlife Conservation Board
Sacramento, CA

RE: Support for the Del Dios Open Space Preserve Expansion Project

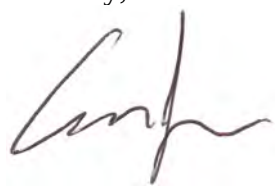
To the Wildlife Conservation Board,

On behalf of Volcan Mountain Foundation, I am writing to express our strong support for San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy's application to acquire 58.85 acres of critical habitat adjacent to the Del Dios Open Space Preserve. As an organization dedicated to conservation of natural space for all generations, we recognize this acquisition as a high-priority opportunity to enhance the ecological integrity of the San Dieguito River Valley.

This project offers significant regional benefits by expanding the existing 117-acre preserve to nearly 176 acres of contiguous protected land. By safeguarding this specific parcel, the Conservancy is protecting vital coastal sage scrub habitat and securing a known movement corridor for wildlife. Furthermore, this acquisition is essential for the recovery of federally listed species, specifically the Coastal California gnatcatcher, which relies on the connectivity of these native landscapes to thrive.

Protecting large, connected blocks of habitat is one of the most effective strategies we have for ensuring long-term biodiversity in San Diego County. We fully support this acquisition and urge the Wildlife Conservation Board to fund this important expansion of the Del Dios Open Space Preserve.

Sincerely,



Eric Jones
President and Executive Director
Volcan Mountain Foundation

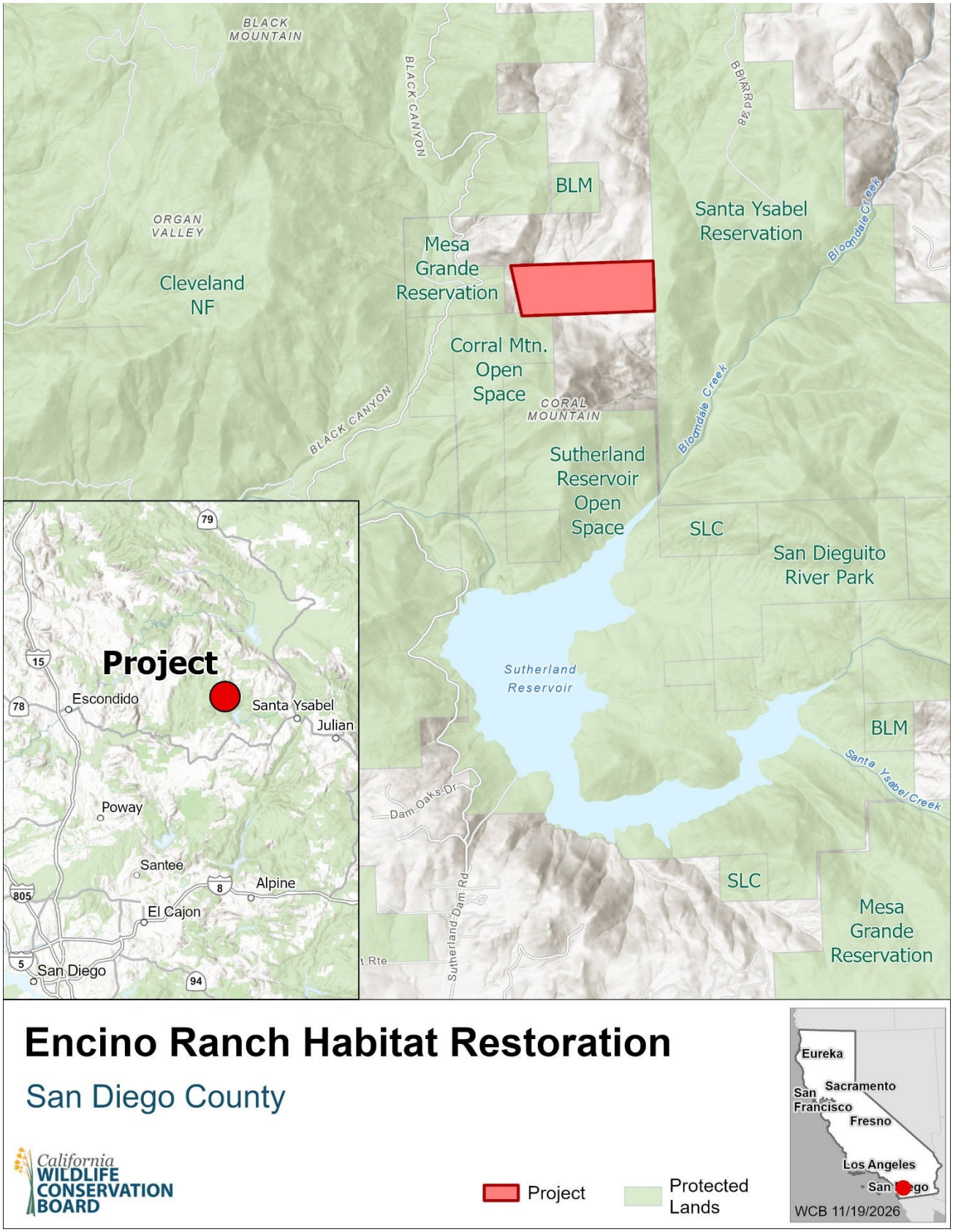
15. Encino Ranch Habitat Restoration **Restoration**
WCB Grant: $445,000 **Implementation**
Fund Source(s): Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024 (Proposition 4 – Existing Programs), Public Resources Code Section 93010 (SB 105, Sec. 94)
Grantee: Encino Conservancy
Landowner: Lisa Lee Hargleroad Family Trust
Location: Six miles northeast of the unincorporated community of Ramona
County: San Diego

Project Highlights

- Increasing wildfire resiliency by removing ladder fuels and dead oaks infected by Golden Spotted Oak Borer (GSOB)
- Enhancing/restoring southern coast live oak riparian and Engelmann oak habitats
- Restoring native grasslands
- Enhancing pollinator habitat for monarchs and other pollinators
- Key species: Engelmann oak and Monarch butterfly

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: Yes, project is located within a DAC and will reduce fire threats, increase groundwater recharge, and protect and enhance biodiversity.
- Tribal Partnerships: Yes, the Mesa Grande Band of Diegueño Mission Indians are currently contracted by the Encino Conservancy to help with cultural resource monitoring.
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B2.1, B2.3, C1.2, C2.1


BLACK MOUNTAIN
BLACK CANYON
BBIAR Rd
BLM
ORGAN VALLEY
Santa Ysabel Reservation
Bloomdale Creek
Mesa Grande Reservation
Cleveland NF
Corral Mtn. Open Space
CORAL MOUNTAIN
BLACK CANYON
Bloomdale Creek
Sutherland Reservoir Open Space
SLC
San Dieguito River Park
Project
Escondido
Santa Ysabel
Julian
Poway
Santee
Alpine
El Cajon
San Diego
Sutherland Reservoir
BLM
Santa Ysabel Creek
Dam Oaks Dr
Sutherland Dam Rd
SLC
Mesa Grande Reservation
Encino Ranch Habitat Restoration
San Diego County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 11/19/2026

Project Description

The Encino Ranch Habitat Restoration project (Project) addresses southern coast live oak riparian forest habitat degradation due to an infestation of gold spotted oak borer (GSOB). GSOB is killing coast live oak trees in the area, leading to an accumulation of dead trees and ladder fuels and an increased susceptibility to wildfire. The Project also proposes to remove several acres of invasive plant species and restore native grassland and pollinator habitat. The Project will increase wildfire and climate resiliency and improve native habitats by:

- Improving the resilience of 30.5 acres of southern coast live oak riparian forest by removing ladder fuels and 60 dead oak trees.
- Establishing 200 Engelmann oaks, which are not susceptible to GSOB, creating 2.05 acres of Engelmann oak woodland.
- Removing 6.1 acres of invasive species including Russian olive and Armenian blackberry.
- Restoring 12.3 acres of native grassland through burning, invasive species control and planting 500 native bunchgrass and forb seedlings.
- Installing 200 plantings of native forbs, sedges, and small shrubs to support native pollinators.
- Enhancing groundwater recharge through the installation of three beaver dam analogs (BDAs) or post assisted log structures (PALS).
- Repairing perimeter fencing to prevent neighboring cattle from entering the ranch.

Long-Term Management

The Encino Conservancy has prepared a Management Plan that guides management actions for the Project, including management of the Encino Ranch. If at any time during the 20-year life of the Project's Long-Term Management Period, Grantee 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	Totals
Project Management	$7,739	---	$7739
Enhance Southern Coast Live Oak Riparian Habitat	$128,792	$14,540	$143,332
Invasive Species Removal	$41,275	$2,311	$43,586
Installation of BDAs or PALS	$17,699	---	$17,699
Supplemental Reforestation	$29,056	$6,506	$35,562
Native Grassland Restoration	$110,724	$2,867	$113,591
Native Pollinator Habitat Enhancement	$32,683	$4,508	$37,191
Monitoring and Reporting	$27,647	$1,500	$29,147

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Indirect Costs	$49,385	---	$49,385
Total	$445,000	$32,232	$477,232

Non-WCB funders include:

- Encino Conservancy - $14,217
- California Climate Action Corps - $4,625
- Resource Conservation District of Greater San Diego - $10,540
- Netflix - $750
- U.S Fish and Wildlife Service Partners for Wildlife Program - $2,100

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Heather Cady, Director of Forestry and Fire Prevention Programs, RCD of Greater San Diego County
- Caroline Garcia, President, Southern California Chapter of The Wildlife Society
- Clayton Tschudy, CEO & Executive Director, San Diego Canyonlands
- Jim Crouch, Founder, Re-Oak California

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

The project is proposed as exempt from the CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15304, Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land. Subject to approval of this proposal by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Kelly Seyarto, District 32
- Assembly: Assemblymember Carl DeMaio, District 75

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the WCB approve this project as proposed, authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project, and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.



Oak woodland habitat that has been infested with Gold Spotted Oak Borer. Dead oaks proposed to be removed.



Large open native grassland restoration area.

RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Greater San Diego County

Resource Conservation District of Greater San Diego County
11769 Waterhill Road Lakeside, CA 92040
rcdsandiego.org

2/20/2026

Wildlife Conservation Board
c/o CDFW, P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

Re: Letter of Support – Encino Ranch Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Project

Dear Members of the Wildlife Conservation Board,

The Resource Conservation District of Greater San Diego County (RCDGSDC) is pleased to express our strong support for the Encino Conservancy's *Encino Ranch Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Project*.
The Encino Ranch project is well aligned with and identified in the Regional Forest and Fire Capacity (RFFC) Regional Priority Plan for Southern California. The project advances regional strategies to reduce hazardous fuels, restore fire-adapted ecosystems, address gold-spotted oak borer impacts in riparian oak woodlands, restore degraded native grasslands, and improve watershed function through process-based restoration. Its integrated approach combining fuel reduction, invasive species management, native reforestation, grassland restoration, and hydrologic enhancement reflects the multi-benefit, landscape-scale implementation emphasized in the RFFC framework.
The project demonstrates strong readiness and thoughtful use of regulatory pathways, including pursuit of the CEQA Statutory Exemption for Restoration Projects (SERP), which will facilitate timely implementation while maintaining environmental safeguards. The Encino Conservancy has demonstrated the organizational capacity and long-term stewardship commitment necessary to sustain project benefits.

RCDGSDC strongly supports this application and respectfully requests the Wildlife Conservation Board to fund the Encino Ranch Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Project. This effort represents a strategic investment in regional wildfire resilience, habitat restoration, and watershed health consistent with RFFC priorities.

Please feel free to contact me at heather.cady@rcdsandiego.org with any questions.

Sincerely,

Heather Cady
Director of Forestry and Fire Prevention Programs,
RCD of Greater San Diego County

Southern California Chapter of The Wildlife Society
soca@twssocal.org https://wildlife.org/socal/

Date: 2/7/2026

To: Wildlife Conservation Board

Re: Letter of Support – *Encino Ranch Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Project*

Dear Members of the Wildlife Conservation Board,

The Southern California Chapter of The Wildlife Society is pleased to offer our strong support for the Encino Conservancy's proposed Encino Ranch Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Project in northeastern San Diego County.

Founded in 1937, The Wildlife Society is an international network of over 11,000 leaders in wildlife science, management and conservation who are dedicated to excellence in wildlife stewardship. Our mission is to inspire, empower, and enable wildlife professionals to sustain wildlife populations and habitats through science-based management and conservation. The Southern California Chapter's membership comprises professionals from Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, and Ventura counties. Our membership works to protect and restore wildlife and native habitats throughout the region, with a particular focus on conserving biologically rich landscapes that support species movement, ecosystem function, and long-term resilience in the face of climate change. The Encino Ranch property occupies an important position within a larger network of conserved and semi-natural lands in the Ramona and Santa Ysabel region. Our Chapter supports actions taken to conserve, protect, and enhance wildlife habitat and endorses the Encino Conservancy's proposed Encino Ranch Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Project as closely aligning with our mission and goals.

The proposed project addresses several pressing ecological challenges facing inland San Diego County, including declining riparian oak forests impacted by gold-spotted oak borer, increased wildfire risk, degraded native grasslands, and the loss of pollinator habitat. The project's multi-benefit design—combining riparian forest restoration,

invasive species removal, native grassland and pollinator plantings, and hydrologic enhancement—will improve habitat quality for a wide range of wildlife species, including grassland-dependent mammals, raptors, native pollinators, and sensitive species associated with riparian corridors.

We are particularly encouraged by the project's emphasis on restoring natural processes and building long-term ecological resilience rather than relying on short-term or single-benefit interventions. By reducing fuel loads, enhancing native vegetation structure, and improving watershed function, the project will help safeguard wildlife habitat from future wildfire and climate-driven impacts.

The Southern California Chapter of The Wildlife Society supports the Encino Conservancy's application and commends the organization for its thoughtful, landscape-scale approach to conservation and stewardship. We respectfully urge the Wildlife Conservation Board to give this proposal full and favorable consideration.

Sincerely,

Caroline Garcia

Caroline Garcia
President
Southern California Chapter
The Wildlife Society

LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR ENCINO RANCH

25th February, 2026

Re: Letter of Support – Encino Ranch Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Project

Dear Members of the Wildlife Conservation Board,

San Diego Canyonlands is pleased to offer our strong support for the Encino Conservancy's proposed *Encino Ranch Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Project* in northeastern San Diego County.

San Diego Canyonlands is a local 501(c)(3) non-profit with 18 years of dedicated service to the San Diego community revitalizing natural areas and empowering communities. Through education, volunteerism and equitable workforce development, Canyonlands is breaking barriers for underserved communities, empowering residents to become environmental stewards and lead transformative change across the county. Our mission is to uplift communities by connecting people with nature through ecosystem restoration, workforce development, environmental education and advocacy, and by harnessing the mutually beneficial power of conservation to safeguard biodiversity and improve quality of life.

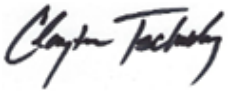
The proposed project addresses several pressing ecological challenges facing conservation in San Diego County, including declining riparian oak forests impacted by gold-spotted oak borer, increased wildfire risk, degraded native grasslands, and the loss of pollinator habitat. The project's multi-benefit design, combining riparian forest restoration, invasive species removal, native grassland and pollinator plantings, and hydrologic enhancement, will improve habitat quality for a wide range of wildlife species, including grassland-dependent mammals, raptors, native pollinators, and sensitive species associated with riparian corridors.

We are particularly encouraged by the project's emphasis on restoring natural processes and building long-term ecological resilience rather than relying on short-term or single-benefit interventions. By reducing fuel loads, enhancing native vegetation structure, and improving watershed function, the project will help safeguard wildlife habitat from future wildfire and climate-driven impacts.

San Diego Canyonlands offers our strongest possible endorsement of this proposal. We respectfully and request the Wildlife Conservation Board to grant this project full and favorable consideration. The montane habitats of northeastern San Diego County are irreplaceable. The window to

protect and restore them is narrowing. Encino Ranch Conservancy has the vision, the expertise, and the partnerships to make this project succeed.

Sincerely,



Clayton Tschudy
CEO & Executive Director
San Diego Canyonlands

SAN DIEGO CANYONLANDS
PROMOTE. PROTECT. RESTORE

To: Wildlife Conservation Board February 12, 2026

Re: Letter of Support – *Encino Ranch Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Project*

Dear Members of the Wildlife Conservation Board,

My name is Jim Crouch, and I am the founder of Re-Oak California, an initiative dedicated to restoring Southern California's native oak populations through the careful collection, propagation, and planting of locally sourced acorns. I am writing to express my strong support for the Encino Conservancy's *Encino Ranch Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Project*.

For two years, I have worked directly with the Encino Conservancy to collect and grow Engelmann oak (*Quercus engelmannii*) seedlings using acorns gathered from the Encino Ranch property itself. Engelmann oak is one of the most difficult native oaks to propagate successfully, due to its narrow ecological range, sensitivity during early establishment, and the need for site-appropriate genetics. The use of locally sourced acorns, grown with attention to healthy taproot development and planted in suitable habitat, is critical to achieving long-term survival.

Based on my firsthand experience, the Encino Ranch site is well-suited for Engelmann oak restoration, and the Conservancy's approach reflects best practices for this species. The proposed planting of Engelmann oak seedlings grown from onsite acorns significantly increases the likelihood that these trees will establish, mature, and ultimately contribute to a resilient native oak woodland.

Engelmann oaks are a keystone species in Southern California landscapes, providing food, shelter, and nesting habitat for a wide range of wildlife while also contributing to long-term carbon storage and watershed stability. Incorporating Engelmann oak reforestation into a broader restoration strategy that includes fuel reduction, grassland restoration, and hydrologic enhancement is a thoughtful and ecologically sound approach to improving forest resilience and wildlife habitat.

I have been impressed by the Encino Conservancy's commitment to stewardship, use of sound ecological principles, and willingness to invest in long-term outcomes rather than short-term fixes. I am confident that the proposed project will result in meaningful, durable benefits for native wildlife and plant communities in San Diego County.

I strongly support the Encino Conservancy's application to the Wildlife Conservation Board and appreciate WCB's leadership in funding projects that restore native ecosystems using locally informed, science-based practices.

Sincerely,

Jim Crouch

Jim Crouch
Founder, Re-Oak California
reoakcalifornia.com

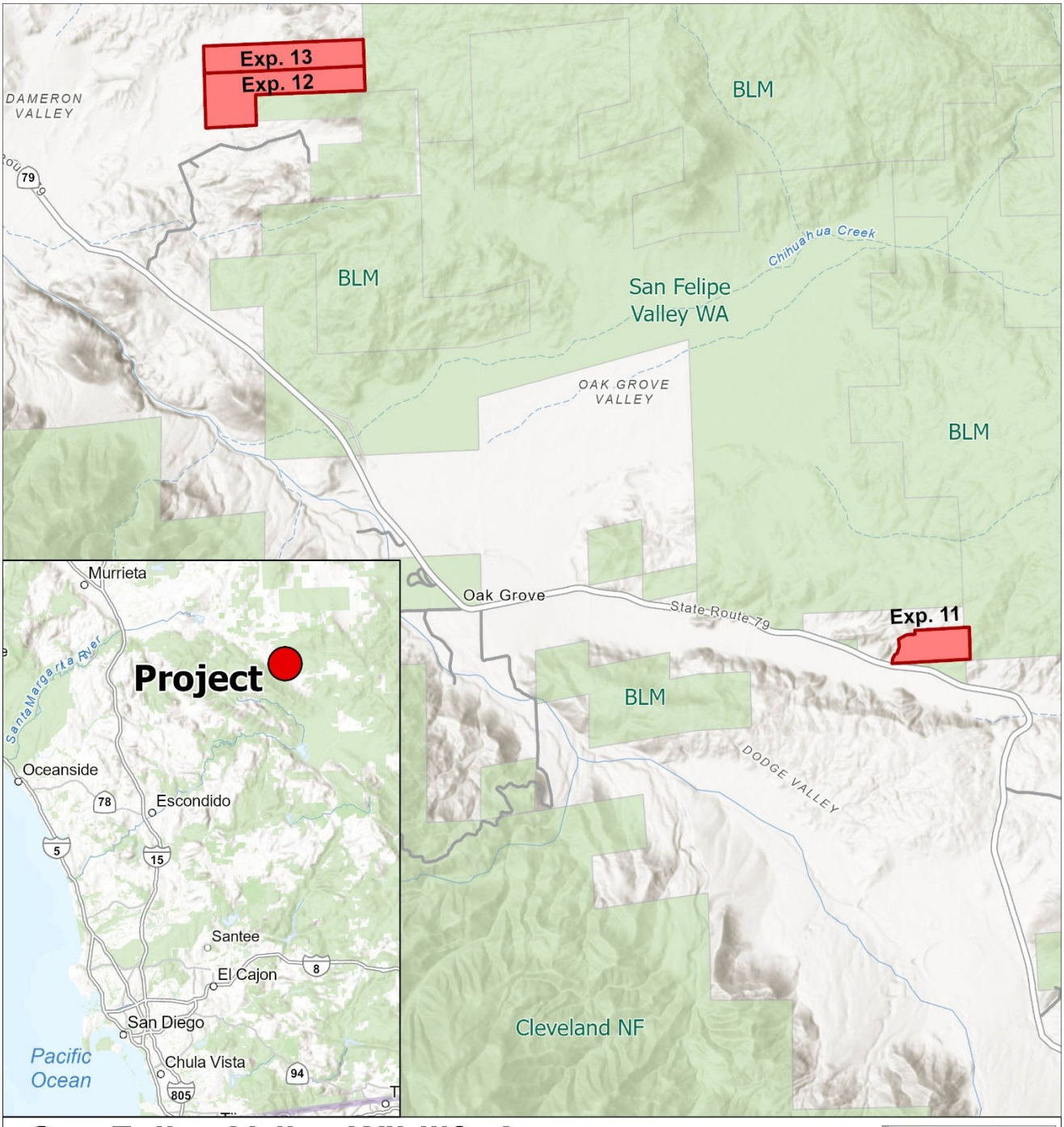
16. San Felipe Valley Wildlife Area, Expansion 11 (Parfrey) **Acquisition**
Purchase Price: $150,000 **CDFW Fee**
Fund Source(s): Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c)
Location: 13 miles north of Warner Springs
County: San Diego
Acres: 31± (Property)

Project Highlights

- Addition to CDFW's San Felipe Valley Wildlife Area, Oak Grove Unit
- Habitats represented: Chapparal and coastal sage scrub
- Key species: coastal California gnat catcher, Stephens' kangaroo rat
- Regional or Species Plan: San Diego MSCP

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: Yes, located within a DAC per the Department of Water Resource's mapping tool.
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Acquisitions
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B1.1, B2.1
- Public Access: Yes, property will be open to limited public access.



San Felipe Valley Wildlife Area, Exp. 11 (Parfrey), Exp. 12 (Corner) and Exp. 13 (Schaarsmith)

San Diego County

California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

Project

Protected Lands



Long-Term Management

The Property will be owned and managed by CDFW as part of the San Felipe Valley Wildlife Area.

Project Funding

The Department of General Services approved fair market value is $150,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	$150,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	$150,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- None received

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

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.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Kelly Seyarto, District 32
- Assembly: Assemblymember Carl DeMaio, District 75

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the WCB approve this project as proposed, authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project, and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.



Entrance road leading into the property, looking north. Property is located on the west and north sides of this photo.



Looking westerly towards the property.

17. San Felipe Valley Wildlife Area, Expansion 12 (Corner) **Acquisition**
Purchase Price: $560,000 **CDFW Fee**
Fund Source(s): Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c)
Location: 17 miles north of Warner Springs
County: San Diego
Acres: 77± (Property)

Property Highlights

- Addition to CDFW's San Felipe Valley Wildlife Area, Oak Grove Unit
- Habitats represented: Chapparal and coastal sage scrub
- Key species: coastal California gnat catcher, Stephens' kangaroo rat
- Regional or Species Plan: San Diego MSCP

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: Yes, located within a DAC per the Department of Water Resource's mapping tool
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Acquisitions
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B1.1, B2.1
- Public Access: Yes, property will be open to limited public access


Exp. 13
Exp. 12
DAMERON VALLEY
BLM
79
Chihuahua Creek
BLM
San Felipe Valley WA
OAK GROVE VALLEY
BLM
Murrieta
Oak Grove
State Route 79
Exp. 11
Project
Santa Margarita River
BLM
Oceanside
78
Escondido
5
15
DODGE VALLEY
Santee
El Cajon
8
San Diego
Pacific Ocean
Chula Vista
94
805
Cleveland NF
San Felipe Valley Wildlife Area,
Exp. 11 (Parfrey), Exp. 12 (Corner) and
Exp. 13 (Schaarsmith)
San Diego County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 11/19/2026

Long-Term Management

The Property will be owned and managed by CDFW as part of the San Felipe Valley Wildlife Area.

Project Funding

The Department of General Services approved fair market value is $560,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	$560,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	$560,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- None received

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

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.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Kelly Seyarto, District 32
- Assembly: Assemblymember Carl DeMaio, District 75

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the WCB approve this project as proposed, authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project, and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.



Eastern edge of the property looking towards the San Felipe Valley Wildlife Area.



Overlook of the property with the San Felipe Valley Wildlife Area on the east side of the photo.

18. San Felipe Valley Wildlife Area, Expansion 13 (Schaarsmith) **Acquisition**
Purchase Price: $245,000 **CDFW Fee**
Fund Source(s): Habitat Conservation Fund (Proposition 117), Fish and Game Code Section 2786(b/c)
Location: 18 miles north of Warner Springs
County: San Diego
Acres: 58± (Property)

Project Highlights

- Addition to CDFW's San Felipe Valley Wildlife Area, Oak Grove Unit
- Habitats represented: Chapparal and coastal sage scrub
- Key species: coastal California gnat catcher, Stephens' kangaroo rat
- Regional or Species Plan: San Diego MSCP

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: Yes, located within a DAC per the Department of Water Resource's mapping tool
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Acquisitions
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B1.1, B2.1
- Public Access: Yes, property will be open to limited public access


Exp. 13
Exp. 12
Exp. 11
DAMERON VALLEY
BLM
BLM
BLM
BLM
San Felipe Valley WA
Chihuahua Creek
OAK GROVE VALLEY
DODGE VALLEY
Cleveland NF
Oak Grove
State Route 79
79
Murrieta
Project
Santa Margarita River
Oceanside
Escondido
78
5
15
Santee
El Cajon
8
San Diego
Pacific Ocean
Chula Vista
94
805
San Felipe Valley Wildlife Area,
Exp. 11 (Parfrey), Exp. 12 (Corner) and
Exp. 13 (Schaarsmith)
San Diego County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 11/19/2026

Long-Term Management

The Property will be owned and managed by CDFW as part of the San Felipe Valley Wildlife Area.

Project Funding

The Department of General Services approved fair market value is $245,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	$245,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	$245,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- None received

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

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.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Kelly Seyarto, District 32
- Assembly: Assemblymember Carl DeMaio, District 75

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the WCB approve this project as proposed, authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project, and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.



Entrance road leading into the property, looking north. Property and San Felipe Wildlife Area is located on the eastside of this road.



Eastern edge of the property looking East towards the existing San Felipe Valley Wildlife Area.

19. Grasslands Ecological Area Hunting Access **Restoration Implementation**

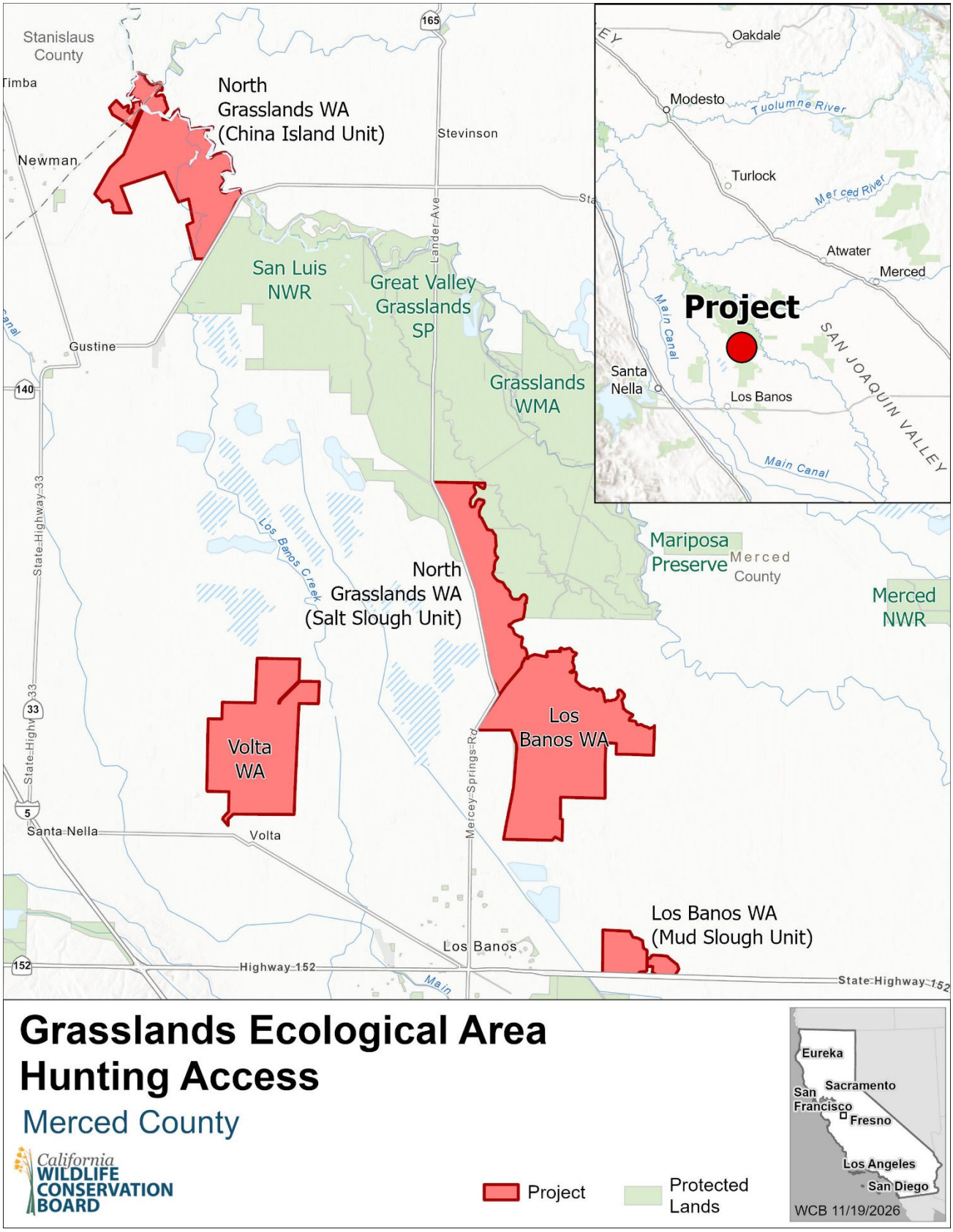
WCB Grant: $542,000
Fund Source(s): California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80132(a)
Grantee: California Waterfowl Association
Landowner: California Department of Fish and Wildlife
Location: Los Banos
County: Merced

Project Highlights

- Increases hunting capacity, distribution, and accessibility.
- Enhances visitor safety and education.
- Reduces maintenance costs and effort.
- Project will include ADA-compliant educational signage in both English and Spanish.

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: Yes. Project expands access to nature and accessible recreation for DAC and SDAC communities nearby.
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: P1.1


Stanislaus County
Newman
Gustine
Stevinson
Lander Ave
State Highway 33
Santa Nella
Volta
Los Banos
Mercey Springs Rd
Highway 152
State Highway 152
Los Banos Creek
Main Canal
North Grasslands WA (China Island Unit)
San Luis NWR
Great Valley Grasslands SP
Grasslands WMA
North Grasslands WA (Salt Slough Unit)
Volta WA
Los Banos WA
Mariposa Preserve
Merced County
Merced NWR
Los Banos WA (Mud Slough Unit)
Oakdale
Modesto
Turlock
Atwater
Merced
Santa Nella
Los Banos
Tuolumne River
Merced River
Main Canal
SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY
Project
Grasslands Ecological Area
Hunting Access
Merced County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 11/19/2026

Project Description

The Grasslands Ecological Area Hunting Access (Project) will improve public access, visitor safety, and recreational opportunities at California Department of Fish and Wildlife's Los Banos Wildlife Area (LBWA), North Grasslands Wildlife Area (NGWA), and Volta Wildlife Area (VWA). Collectively, these wildlife areas provide significant public outdoor recreation opportunities including hunting, wildlife viewing, environmental education, hiking, and fishing, bringing roughly 31,000 visitors annually. However, aging infrastructure, limited accessibility, inadequate visitor amenities, and increasing public demand have created substantial unmet needs that negatively affect visitor experiences and operational efficiency.

Across all three wildlife areas, there is a need for additional hunting blinds, improved parking and roadway infrastructure, updated lighting systems, enhanced accessibility for mobility-impaired visitors, and expanded educational signage. Existing facilities are insufficient to meet current public use demands and have deteriorated due to years of heavy use.

Each wildlife area contains numerous free-roam hunting units where hunters are dispersed throughout the marsh with limited infrastructure. The lack of adequate blind spacing contributes to crowding and safety concerns during peak hunting periods. The proposed installation of strategically placed hunting blinds will improve hunter distribution, reduce overcrowding, and create a safer and more enjoyable recreational experience for visitors.

The Project will improve public access, accessibility, and recreational experience across three wildlife areas by:

- Installing nine new hunting blinds, including multiple 3-person pit and stand-up blinds and one ADA-accessible floating blind.
- Enhancing parking lots and access roads to decrease muddy conditions and providing accessibility to the Project improvements.
- Enhancing the hunter check-station at the Volta Wildlife Area including: upgrading lighting and audio systems, new safety fencing, and a new kiosk with educational signage.

These Project activities will improve ADA accessibility and enhance mobility-impaired participation, increase overall hunting capacity and distribution by adding three new hunters to the existing quota, reduce maintenance needs associated with degraded parking areas, and enhance visitor safety and education through updated lighting, signage and interpretive materials. Long term, these improvements will strengthen public access, enhance the users experience across all three wildlife areas, and support continued participation in California's hunting and wildlife conservation programs.

Long-Term Management

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the Project, including management of the Property. If at any time during the 20-year life of the Project's Long-Term Management Period, California Waterfowl Association 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	Totals
Project Management	$38,000	---	$38,000
Public Access Improvements	$433,000	---	$433,000
Indirect Costs	$71,000	---	$71,000
Total	$542,000	---	$542,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- None received

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

The project is proposed as exempt from the CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15301, Class 1, Existing Facilities, 15302, Class 2, Replacement or Reconstruction, and Section 15303, Class 3, New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures. Subject to approval of this proposal by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Anna M. Caballero, District 14
- Assembly: Assemblymember Esmeralda Soria, District 27

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the WCB approve this project as proposed, authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project, and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.



Educational kiosk at the end of its useful life



Hunting blind to be upgraded with new and accessible blind

Presentation Items

20. Galiano Fen Restoration — Restoration Implementation

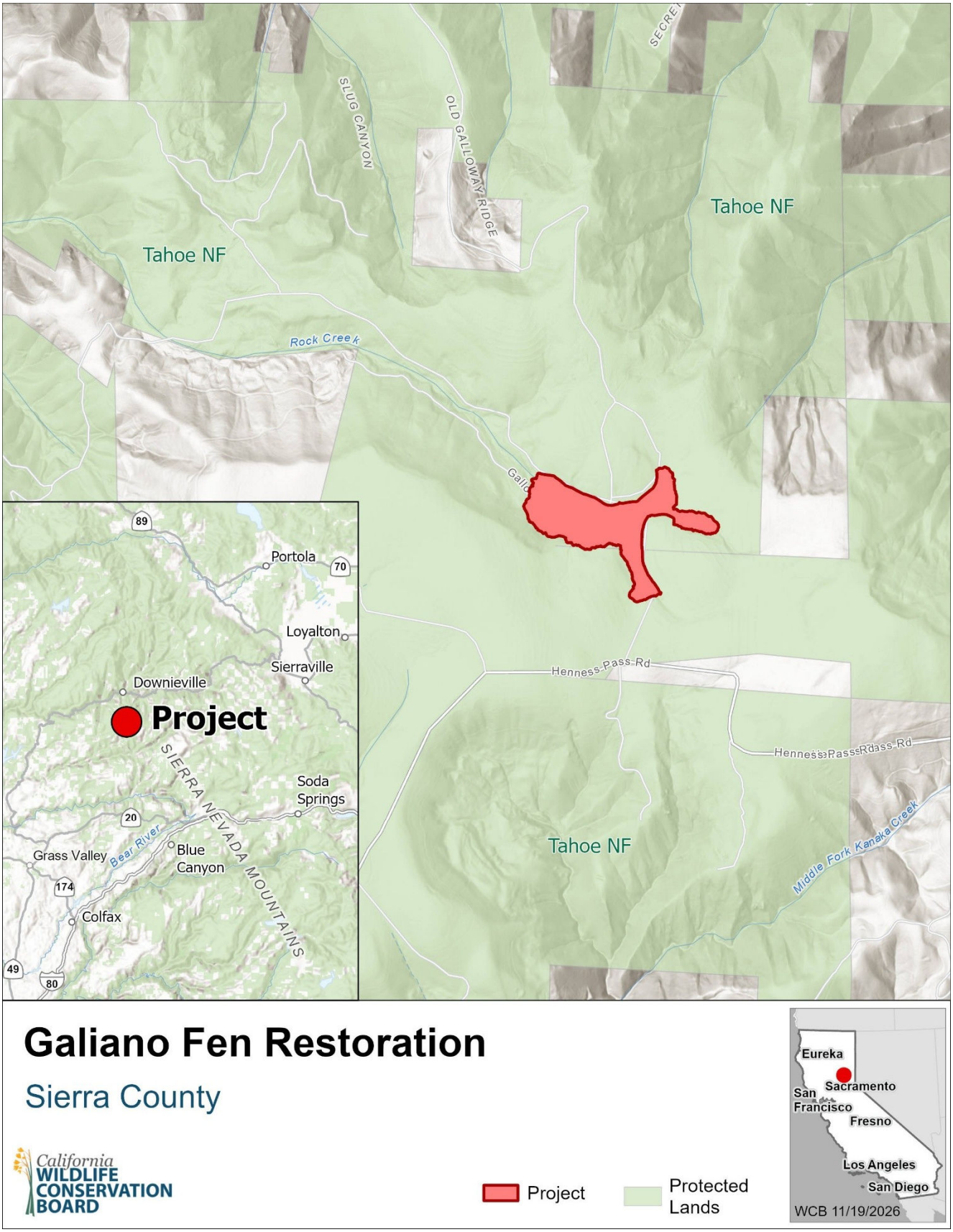
WCB Grant: $2,622,000
Fund Source(s): California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80132(f) Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024 (Proposition 4 – Existing Programs), Public Resources Code Section 93010 (SB 105, Sec. 94)
Grantee: South Yuba River Citizens League (SYRCL)
Landowner: U.S. Forest Service, Tahoe National Forest
Location: Three miles southeast of Downieville
County: Sierra

Project Highlights

- Restores rare fen habitat.
- Contributes to regional conservation goals.
- Restores and expands mountain meadow habitat.
- Removes former mining infrastructure from sensitive habitat.

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: Yes, within DAC on lands open to recreation, increases carbon sequestration and resilience to future high heat events.
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 1, Accelerate Regionally Led Conservation, and Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B1.3, C1.1, C2.1, C2.2, C2.3


SLUG CANYON
OLD GALLOWAY RIDGE
Tahoe NF
Tahoe NF
Rock Creek
Henness Pass Rd
Tahoe NF
Middle Fork Kanaka Creek
89
Portola
70
Loyalton
Sierraville
Downieville
Project
SIERRA NEVADA MOUNTAINS
Soda Springs
20
Bear River
Grass Valley
Blue Canyon
174
Colfax
49
80
Galiano Fen Restoration
Sierra County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 11/19/2026

Project Description

The Galiano Fen Restoration (Project) is located within the headwaters of the North Yuba River in the Northern Sierra Nevada. This Project will restore 22 acres of degraded wet meadow, lost meadow, and fen habitat, as well as 42 acres of overstocked upland forest by reconnecting hydrologic processes, modifying grazing practices, and thinning dense forest stands. The Project area contains a rich history of human activity beginning with indigenous land stewardship followed by grazing, mining, logging, fire suppression, and beaver extirpation. The myriad of uses at the Project site have led to degradation of forests, meadows, fen, and riparian habitats. The Project is supported by the North Yuba Forest Partnership – a regionally led group of nine organizations of which SYRCL and the Tahoe National Forest are founding members. The Project will implement meadow and forest restoration to increase biodiversity and climate resiliency by:

- Restoring remnant mining ponds and stream diversion channels.
- Reconnecting hydrology and reducing erosion utilizing low tech processed based restoration techniques (beaver dam analogs, log jams).
- Removing conifers in lost meadow habitat.
- Improving roads to reduce channel incision and sediment input including culvert removal and road decommissioning.
- Thinning upland forests to reduce wildfire risk and groundwater loss through transpiration.
- Grazing management utilizing virtual fencing and relocation of grazing infrastructure out of sensitive habitats.

Long-Term Management

SYRCL adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the Project, including management of the property. If at any time during the 20-year life of the Project's Long-Term Management Period, Grantee 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	Totals
Project Management	$204,756	---	$204,756
Restoration	$1,891,970	$230,000	$2,121,970
Monitoring	$308,737	$5,225	$313,962
Indirect	$216,537	---	$216,537
Total	$2,622,000	$235,225	$2,857,225

Non-WCB funders include:

- South Yuba River Citizens League - $5,225
- U.S. Forest Service, Tahoe National Forest -$230,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Amber Waters, Deputy Forest Supervisor, U.S. Forest Service
- Shelly Covert, Executive Director, Huswej

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board, as lead agency, determined that 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. Staff considered the lead agency’s CEQA exemption and, subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Megan Dahle, District 01
- Assembly: Assemblymember Heather Hadwick, District 01

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the WCB approve this project as proposed, authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project, and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned



Galiano Fen—road bisecting fen to be decommissioned



Galiano Fen—lost meadow habitat

United States Department of Agriculture
Forest Service
Tahoe National Forest Supervisor's Office
631 Coyote Street
Nevada City, CA 95959
530-478-6100
1-800-735-2929
530-478-6109

File Code: 3400
Date: September 23, 2026

Dear, Wildlife Conservation Board Grant Review Team

The Tahoe National Forest (TNF) is committed to long-term management of Federal Lands within the Galiano Fen Restoration Project and will ensure that future management actions align with restoration objectives so that restoration investments result in durable and sustained ecosystem benefits.

The Galiano Fen Restoration Project has been planned by SYRCL in direct partnership with the TNF, and both SYRCL and the TNF are committed to long-term stewardship and management at Galiano Fen. This Project will build on existing initiatives to restore aspen, meadow, and riparian forests, on TNF land, and will support goals and objectives as outlined in the North Yuba Landscape Resilience Project (North Yuba).

North Yuba is a 275,000-acre project, led by the TNF, SYRCL, and the North Yuba Forest Partnership (NYFP). The primary objectives of the North Yuba are to improve and restore forest health and resilience, protect local communities from the effects of high severity wildfire and climate change, and protect and secure water supplies through restoring watershed process and function. These objectives directly align with the efforts proposed under the Galiano Fen Restoration Project. The North Yuba is a Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program landscape, which is a federal program that was established to support collaborative, science-based, ecosystem restoration on priority forest landscapes.

The TNF has a long-standing partnership with SYRCL, who have spent more than a decade restoring aspen and meadow habitats on TNF Lands. SYRCL was named a co-recipient of the U.S. Forest Service's 2025 Rise to the Future Partnership Award — one of the Forest Service's most meaningful recognitions of collaborative conservation work. In July 2025, the TNF furthered their commitment to partnering on restoration projects with SYRCL by executing a 20-Year Master Stewardship Agreement. This agreement demonstrates the TNF's desire to improve watershed health in partnership with SYRCL.

The TNF is committed to collaborative working relationships with grazing permittees to achieve sound grazing practices that ensure restoration goals are met. The TNF and SYRCL began working with the permittees at Galiano Fen early in the planning process, and the designs include grazing management actions such as moving the fenced gathering pen out of the meadow and into the upland edge, and implementing virtual fencing to protect restoration features. Current permittees have improved livestock management in response to cattle issues and have expressed interest in virtual fence technology. The TNF currently works with permittees that utilize virtual fencing successfully on other allotments within the Forest, providing valuable experience and examples that can help support broader adoption of these tools.

The Tahoe National Forest supports this project and encourages the Wildlife Conservation Board Grant Review Team to consider this project for funding.

Sincerely,

AMBER WATERS

Digitally signed by AMBER WATERS
Date: 2026.09.23 14:41:03 -07'00'

AMBER WATERS
Deputy Forest Supervisor

HUŚWEJ
P.O. Box 2624 Nevada City, CA 95959
530 | 207·0299 hello@huswej.org

June 11, 2026

Dear Wildlife Conservation Board Grant Review Team,

HUŚWEJ (formerly the California Heritage: Indigenous Research Project or CHIRP), is writing in support of the Galiano Fen Restoration Project proposal submitted by the South Yuba River Citizens League (SYRCL). HUŚWEJ is the Tribally guided nonprofit organization of the Nevada City Rancheria Nisenan Tribe. HUŚWEJ supports the Galiano Fen Restoration Project as it will build on existing initiatives to restore aspen, meadow, and riparian forest habitat, on the Ancestral Homelands of the Nisenan Tribe, and will support priorities of HUŚWEJ by including funding to support our Tribal-led Land Stewardship Crew.

This Project is within the 275,000-acre North Yuba Landscape Resilience Project, led by the Tahoe National Forest and the North Yuba Forest Partnership. SYRCL and HUŚWEJ are both founding members of the North Yuba Forest Partnership, formed in 2018. In 2023, the NYFP received the "Forest Service Pacific Southwest Region's Partnership of the Year" award. The proposed Project would help achieve the goals of the North Yuba Landscape Resilience Project by restoring watershed processes and improving forest health and resilience.

HUŚWEJ supports this project and encourages the Wildlife Conservation Board Grant Review Team to consider this project for funding. Please contact Saxon Thomas (saxon@huswej.org) the Land and Cultural Resource Director with any questions.

SHELLY COVERT
Executive Director ◇ HUŚWEJ
Tribal Spokesperson ◇ Nevada City Rancheria

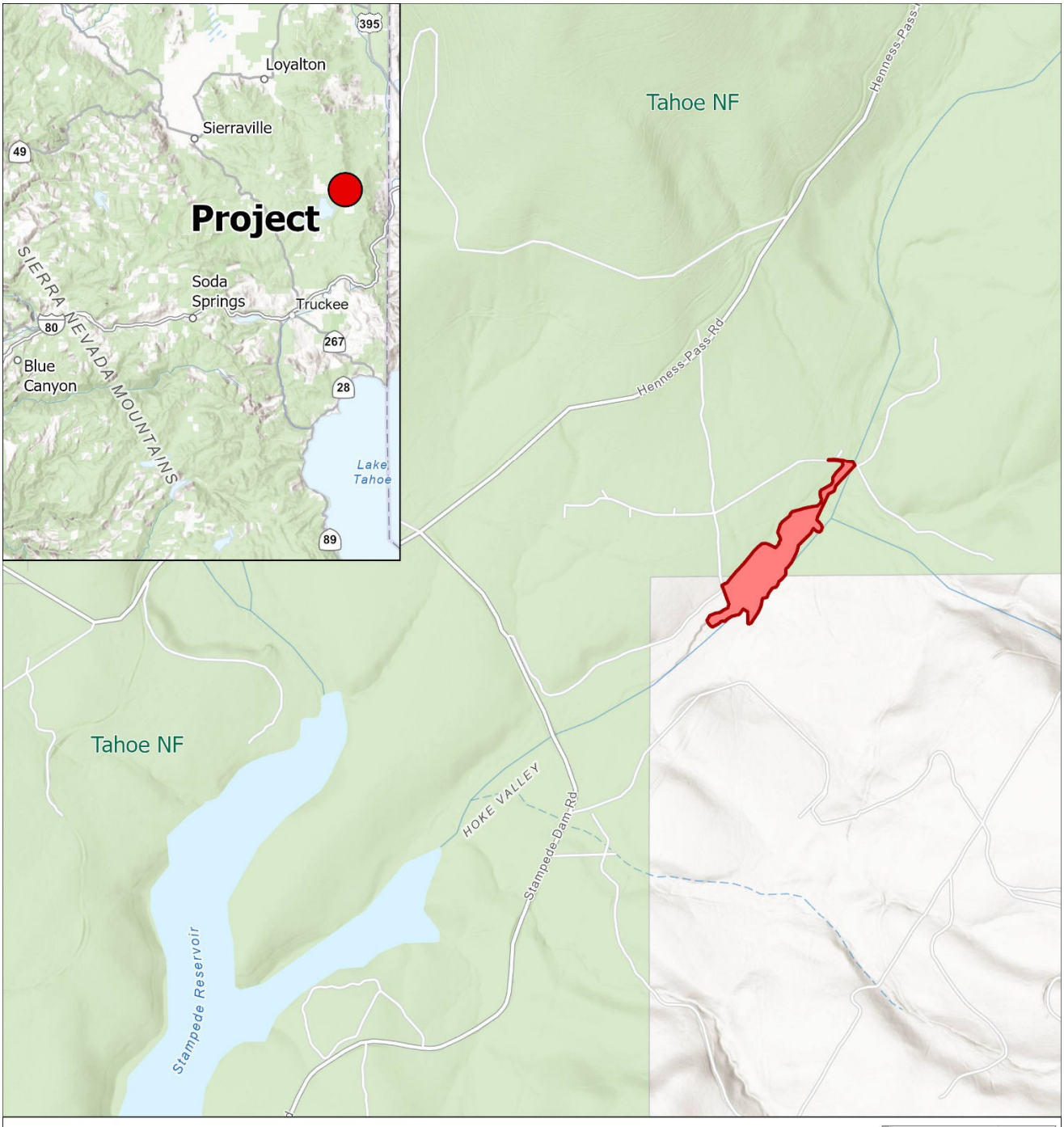
21. Upper Hoke Meadow Restoration **Restoration**
WCB Grant: $1,724,000 **Implementation**
Fund Source(s): Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014 (Proposition 1 – Enhanced stream flows), Water Code Section 79733
Grantee: Truckee River Watershed Council
Landowner: U.S. Forest Service, Tahoe National Forest
Location: 13 miles northeast of Truckee
County: Sierra

Project Highlights

- 35 acres of mountain meadow habitat restoration.
- CDFW ACE rank 5 for terrestrial connectivity (essential and irreplaceable corridor).
- CDFW ACE rank 4 for terrestrial climate change resilience.
- Within U.S. Forest Service priority watershed that is connected to downstream municipal water supply.
- Builds upon regional strategies and prior restoration projects.

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: Yes; within a DAC on public land, increases carbon sequestration.
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 4, Enhance Conservation of Existing Public Lands and Coastal Waters; Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B1.3, C1.1, C2.1, P2.2


Loyalton
Sierraville
Project
Soda Springs
Truckee
Blue Canyon
SIERRA NEVADA MOUNTAINS
Lake Tahoe
Tahoe NF
Henness Pass Rd
HOKE VALLEY
Stampede Dam Rd
Stampede Reservoir
Upper Hoke Meadow Restoration
Sierra County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 11/19/2026

Project Description

Hoke Meadow is a 60-acre meadow in the Boca watershed on the east side of the Truckee River watershed with a diverse land use history that includes a section of the historic Emigrant Trail, roads, dispersed camping, telephone and petroleum lines, historic logging, and grazing impacts. The Lower Hoke Meadow Restoration project was funded by the USFS and completed in 2023, leaving 35 acres of upper Hoke Meadow remaining to complete the restoration of the entirety of Hoke Valley. The stream within the Upper Hoke Meadow Restoration (Project) project area is incised and the channel has eroded up to ten feet deep in some sections, creating increasingly dry conditions that decrease meadow habitat quality and biodiversity. The Project will improve these conditions by:

- Replacing an erosive road crossing with improved low water crossing.
- Expanding an inset floodplain to allow increased groundwater infiltration and expand wet meadow habitat.
- Removing a remnant railroad berm that is disrupting hydrology.
- Partially filling a channel to improve hydrologic conditions.
- Extensive pre/post project monitoring for efficacy and site response (i.e. vegetation, groundwater).

Long-Term Management

The Truckee River Watershed Council adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the Project, including management of the property. If at any time during the 20-year life of the Project's Long-Term Management Period, Grantee 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	Totals
Project Management	$80,101	---	$80,101
Monitoring	$115,500	---	$115,500
Restoration	$1,484,150	$18,800	$1,502,950
Indirect	$44,249	---	$44,249
Total	$1,724,000	$18,800	$1,742,800

Non-WCB funders include:

- Truckee River Watershed Council - $3,800
- Sacramento Regional Conservation Corps - $15,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Rachel Hutchison, Acting District Ranger, Tahoe National Forest

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

The Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board, as lead agency, determined that the Project is categorically exempt from the CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15333, Class 33, Small Habitat Restoration Projects, as a ecological restoration project that does not exceed five acres. Staff considered the lead agency's CEQA exemption and, subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Megan Dahle, District 01
- Assembly: Assemblymember Heather Hadwick, District 01

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommend that the WCB approve this project as proposed, authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project, and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.



Upper Hoke Meadow, inset floodplain



Upper Hoke Meadow, incised channel

United States Department of Agriculture | **Forest Service** | **Tahoe National Forest Truckee Ranger District** | **10811 Stockrest Springs Road Truckee, CA 96161 (530) 587-3558**

File Code: 2500
Date: June 3rd, 2026

CA Wildlife Conservation Board
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

RE: Upper Hoke Meadow Restoration

I am writing to express my support for the Upper Hoke Meadow Restoration project. This meadow project is an essential part of the shared priority of watershed-scale restoration within the Boca sub-basin of the within the larger Middle Truckee River watershed on the Tahoe National Forest (TNF).

The Tahoe National Forest and the Truckee River Watershed Council have a long-standing partnership and have worked together to complete a variety of restoration projects across the Truckee River basin over the past 30 years, including the highly successful restoration of Lower Hoke Meadow. Forest Service staff have been an essential part of the project design team and will assist with project implementation through pre-construction services, on-call resource support, and construction implementation.

The Upper Hoke Meadow Restoration project will complete the restoration of the 60-acre Hoke meadow and helps to link past, present, and future restoration work in the Truckee River watershed.

Sincerely,

Rachel Hutchinson

District Ranger (Acting)

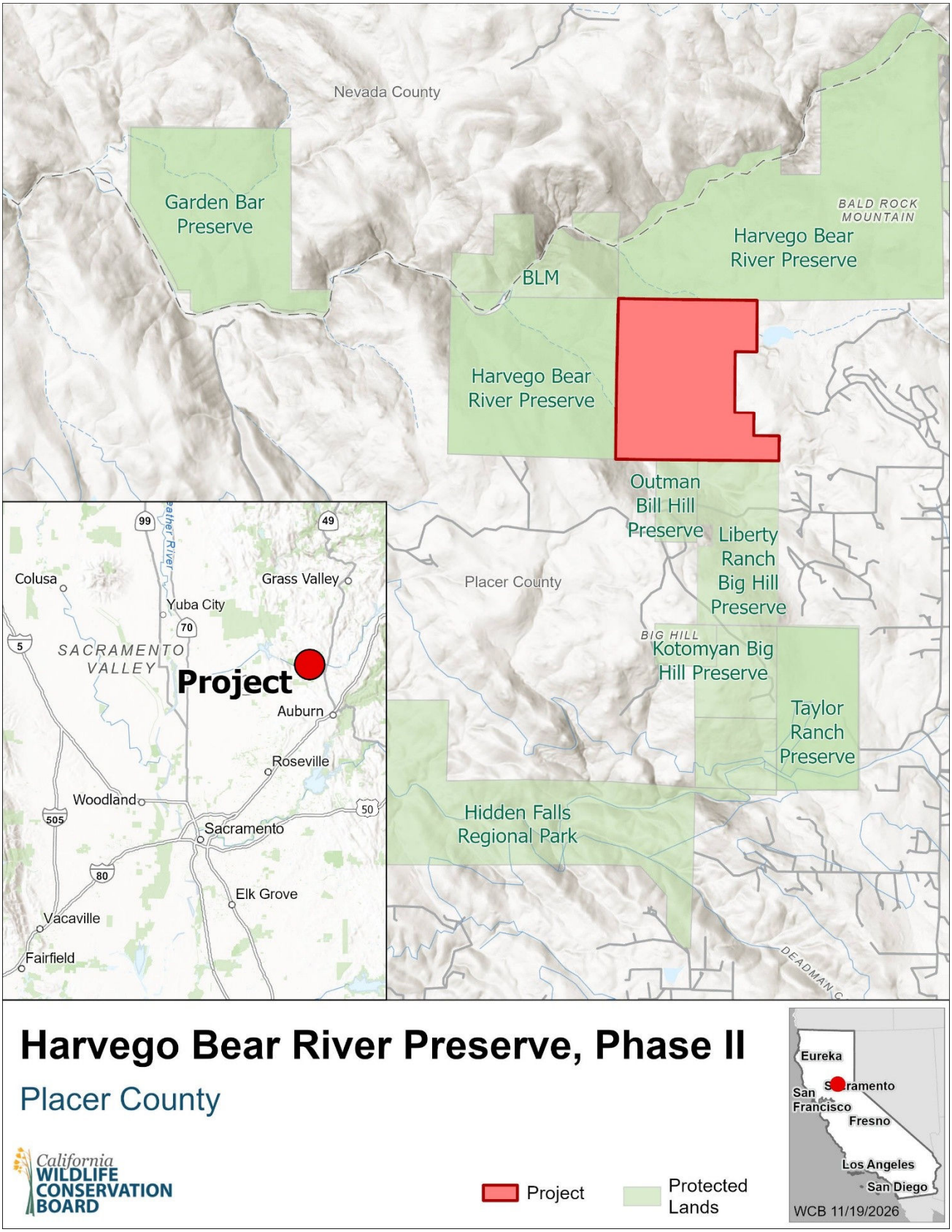
22. Harvego Bear River Preserve, Phase II **Acquisition**
WCB Grant: $5,200,000 **Fee**
Fund Source(s): Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024 (Proposition 4 – Existing Programs), Public Resources Code Section 93010 (SB 105, Sec. 94)
Grantee: Placer Land Trust (PLT)
Location: Approximately 4.5 miles northwest of Auburn
County: Placer
Acres: 525± (Property)

Property Highlights

- Property represents the second and final phase to acquire and permanently protect the Harvego Bear River Preserve, resulting in an approximately 2,300-acre preserve located adjacent to thousands of acres of already protected land.
- To the north, northwest, and west, the Property connects to protected land on both sides of the Bear River in Placer and Nevada Counties. To the south, the Property connects to protected land on both sides of Raccoon Creek.
- Property will enhance the connectivity of approximately 9,000 acres of contiguous conserved land.
- WCB was a funder in the acquisition and protection of the first phase of Harvego Bear River Preserve (2010) as well as PLT's nearby Taylor Ranch Big Hill Preserve (2007) and Laursen Bear River Preserve (2018). PLT also holds a conservation easement over the nearby Liberty Ranch Big Hill Preserve which WCB helped fund (2007).
- Habitats represented: About 90% of the Property consists of oak woodlands; this habitat type contains some of the highest biodiversity of any ecosystem in California. There is abundant water on the Property, including two ponds that hold water year-round and several intermittent streams.
- Key species: Northwestern Pond Turtle, Blacktail deer, wild pig, and coyote. Mountain lion, bobcat black bear, gray fox, and ringtail have been observed on adjacent PLT preserves.
- Placer County is currently working on permitting and construction of new trails on both PLT and Placer County property that will connect the nearby Big Hill Preserve with Hidden Falls Regional Park with the goal of ultimately connecting Hidden Falls Regional Park to the Harvego Bear River Preserve.
- Development is a significant threat to the Property. The Property is adjacent to the Auburn Valley Golf Course community which consists of approximately 120 homes. The Property's zoning allows for 33 primary residential units and an additional 33 Accessory Dwelling Units to be built with the potential to irreversibly impair the Property's conservation values.

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Acquisitions
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B.1.1, B.2.1, C.1.2, P.1.1, P.1.2
- Public Access: Yes. Upon acquisition, PLT will begin utilizing the Property as part of its 15-year-old docent-led tour program, which includes hiking, mountain biking, and equestrian riding, offered free to the public with reservation, and led by PLT volunteers or staff. Additionally, PLT committed to work with the CDFW SHARE Program to provide public hunting and fishing access to the Property. It is important to note that the Property is not served by a public road (deeded access to the Property is via private road across several private properties) so full, unfettered public access is not currently envisioned.


Nevada County
Garden Bar Preserve
BALD ROCK MOUNTAIN
Harvego Bear River Preserve
BLM
Harvego Bear River Preserve
Outman Bill Hill Preserve
Liberty Ranch Big Hill Preserve
Placer County
BIG HILL
Kotomyan Big Hill Preserve
Taylor Ranch Preserve
Hidden Falls Regional Park
DEADMAN C
Colusa
Grass Valley
Yuba City
SACRAMENTO VALLEY
Project
Auburn
Roseville
Woodland
Sacramento
Elk Grove
Vacaville
Fairfield
99
49
70
5
505
50
80
Harvego Bear River Preserve, Phase II
Placer County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 11/19/2026

Long-Term Management

PLT will work with the Placer Conservation Authority (PCA) who will hold a Conservation Easement on the subject Property, and PLT and PCA will create a Long-Term Management Plan that is consistent with the adjacent protected land management and the region-wide Placer County Conservation Program (HCP/NCCP). The primary anticipated improvement is utilizing the Property for public recreation, including (as time and funding allow) access and trail enhancements, docent-led activities, and trail use, and (when set up in the SHARE Program) hunting and fishing.

Project Funding

The Department of General Services approved fair market value is $8,130,000, and the landowner has agreed to sell at a reduced price of $8,000,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	$5,200,000
Placer Conservation Authority/Placer County	$2,800,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	$8,000,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Northern Foothills Partnership
- United Auburn Indian Community
- 40 Acre Conservation League

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

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.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Roger Niello, District 6
- Assembly: Assemblymember Joe Patterson, District 5

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the WCB approve this project as proposed, authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project, and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.



The property consists of rolling oak woodlands with two year-round ponds.



Deer are abundant on the property.

9/23/26

To Whom it May Concern:

Re: Support of Placer Land Trust effort to acquire/protect the Harvego Phase 2 property

On behalf of the Northern Foothills Partnership, we are writing in support of Placer Land Trust's project to acquire and permanently protect the 525-acre Harvego Phase 2 property in Placer County north of Auburn near the Bear River.

The Northern Foothills Partnership formed in 2009 as a collaborative conservation effort of Bear Yuba Land Trust, The Trust for Public Land, and Placer Land Trust. In 2011, the Counties of Placer, Nevada, and Yuba signed a Tri-County Proclamation in support of the Partnership. The Partnership works to facilitate investment in landscape-level conservation of the Sierra foothills bioregion across the Bear, Yuba, and American River watersheds for the economic and ecological health of our local rural communities, for the benefit of all Californians, for future generations. In Placer County, the Partnership's objectives also overlap with and support the objectives of the Placer County Conservation Program.

The waterways, oak woodlands, and ranches in the foothills of Placer, Nevada, and Yuba counties provide critical wildlife habitat and migration connectivity. Blue oak woodlands are one of the highest biodiversity natural communities in the state and recognized in multiple state plans and legislation as a priority for conservation. This region of the foothills has seen substantial reduction and fragmentation of blue oak woodlands due to rapid development, and Placer County continues to be one of the fastest-growing counties in California.

To date, nearly 10,000 acres of contiguous open land surrounding this 525-acre property have been permanently protected, across two watersheds and two counties. This landscape-scale conservation block provides incredible natural, agricultural, and recreational public benefits. The Harvego property is at imminent risk of sale for subdivision and development, and timely acquisition and protection by Placer Land Trust – under contract with the landowner only until December 31, 2026 – is the best outcome for this property and the Sierra Nevada foothills region.

For all of these reasons, we fully support Placer Land Trust's effort to secure funding to make this project successful, and we strongly encourage your support.

Sincerely,

Erin Tarr
Executive Director
Bear Yuba Land Trust

Heidi Krolick
Conservation Director
Trust for Public Land

MIWOK MAIDU United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria

John L. Williams, Chairman
Gabe Cayton, Vice Chairman
Leonard Osorio, Secretary
Jason Camp, Treasurer
Cheyenne Rey, Council Member

October 1, 2026, 2026

Wildlife Conservation Board, c/o CDFW
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

Re: Placer Land Trust Grant funding to Acquire/protect the Harvego Phase 2 Property

Dear Members of the Board,

On behalf of the United Auburn Indian Community (UAIC), we are writing to support Placer Land Trust's proposal to acquire and permanently protect the 525-acre Harvego Bear River Preserve Phase 2 property in Placer County north of Auburn near the Bear River. The addition of this property would add to the corridor of open space in the Auburn area, which will conserve the nature and character of the foothills and provide recreation.

The Placer Land Trust has proven to be a consistent partner to UAIC for the last 20 years. In 2010, several of our elders visited the property with PLT representatives to discuss the long-term preservation of the area. The PLT has committed to continuing their partnership with the Tribe by agreeing to tribal access, stewardship and use of PLT lands, including tribal stewardship of cultural sites and native plant restoration.

In recent years, we have been dismayed by the rise in Eco-Capitalism by organizations that seek millions in grant funding to "conserve" land. These organizations often neglect or destroy the land that they are claiming to conserve and misuse public funds. It is critical that we support local land trusts with a proven track record, like Placer Land Trust. Please contact Melodi McAdams, Senior Tribal Heritage Manager, at (530) 401-7470 or by email at mmcadams@auburnrancheria.com if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

John L. Williams,
Chairman

Cc: Placer Land Trust

Docusign Envelope ID: 4AC39D5B-DA63-8396-8052-28261584403B

info@40acreleague.org
www.40acreleague.org
40 Acre Conservation League
901 H Street, Suite 120 PMB-61
Sacramento, CA 95814

Cameron Stewart – President
Blake Milton, Secretary –Treasurer
Jade Stevens – Member

October 20, 2026

Wildlife Conservation Board
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

RE: Support for Agenda Item 22 – Harvego Bear River Preserve, Phase II (Placer Land Trust)

Dear Members of the Wildlife Conservation Board:

On behalf of 40 Acre Conservation League (40ACL), I am writing to express our strong support for Placer Land Trust's Harvego Bear River Preserve, Phase II project and the proposed $5.2 million funding allocation before the Wildlife Conservation Board at its November 19, 2026 meeting.

As California's first Black-led land trust, 40ACL is committed to conserving natural lands, advancing environmental stewardship, and expanding equitable access to outdoor spaces. We recognize the importance of protecting California's natural landscapes while ensuring that future generations have opportunities to experience and appreciate them.

The proposed acquisition of approximately 525 acres near Auburn represents an important investment in the long-term conservation of Placer County's natural resources. By protecting oak woodlands and grasslands, enhancing habitat connectivity, and providing opportunities for future wildlife-oriented public access, this project supports critical conservation priorities that closely align with our organization's mission.

Through our own conservation and stewardship efforts in Placer County, we understand the importance of preserving these landscapes and the lasting benefits that thoughtful land protection can provide to wildlife, local communities, and future generations.

We commend Placer Land Trust and the Placer Conservation Authority for their continued commitment to protecting the region's natural resources and strongly encourage the Wildlife Conservation Board to approve the proposed funding allocation for Harvego Bear River Preserve, Phase II.

Thank you for your consideration and your continued investment in California's conservation future.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:
Jade Stevens
25C46DFC8E3940D...

Jade Stevens
Executive Director
40 Acre Conservation League

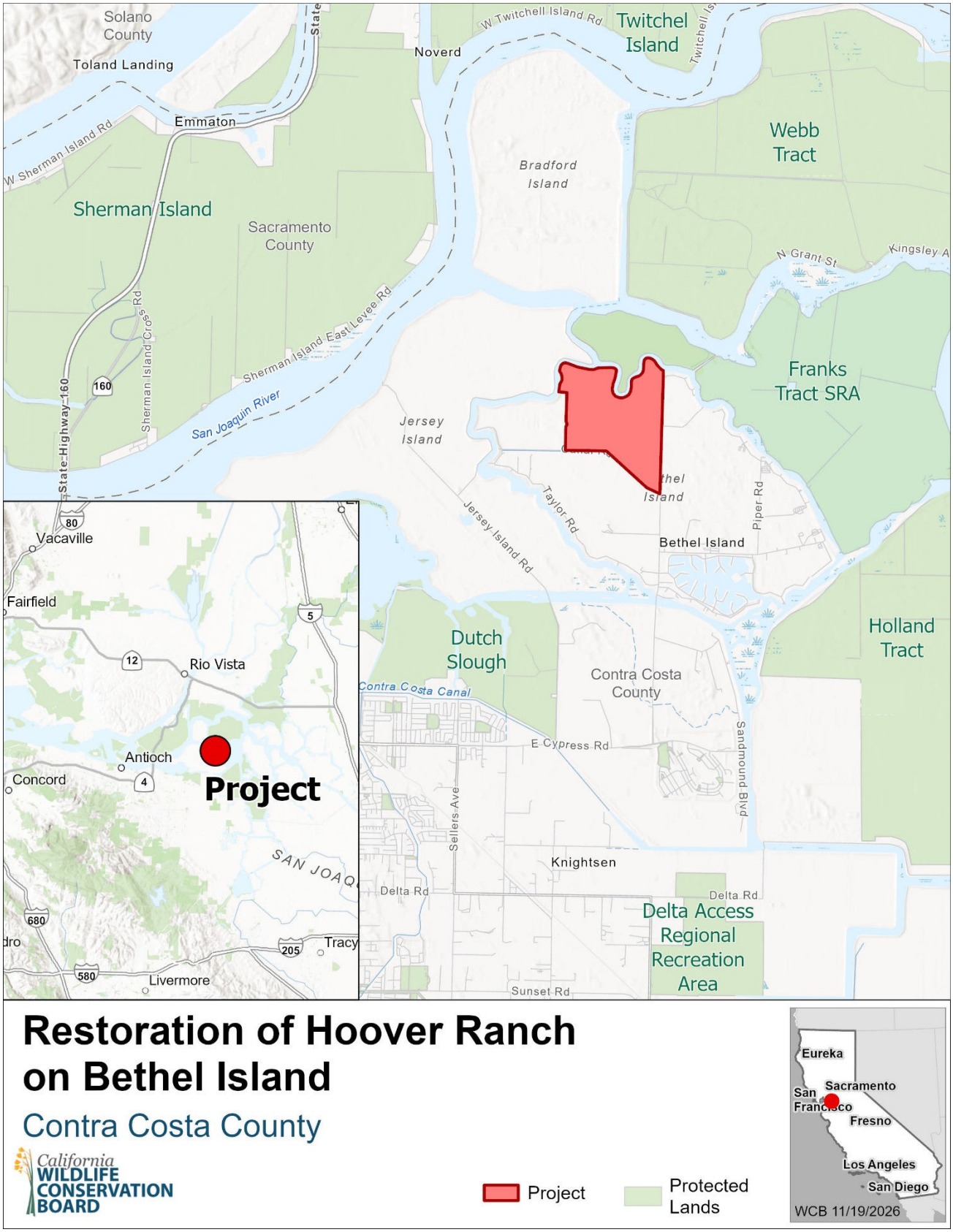
23. Restoration of Hoover Ranch on Bethel Island **Restoration**
WCB Grant: $1,659,000 **Planning**
Fund Source(s): Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024 (Proposition 4 – Existing Programs), Public Resources Code Section 93010 (SB105, Sec. 94).
Grantee: John Muir Land Trust
Landowner: John Muir Land Trust
Location: 6.5 miles northeast of Oakley, CA.
County: Contra Costa

Project Highlights

- Large privately held parcel comprising 1/5th of Bethel Island, a leveed and subsided residential island in the interior Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.
- Will bring 500 acres of wetland, riparian, and rare inland dune habitat to a shovel-ready restoration stage.
- Will deliver restoration design to halt subsidence and peat soil oxidation at the site.
- Establishes public access to open space and safe, habitat-sensitive walking paths, particularly for the local community.
- Key species: giant garter snake, Swainson’s hawk, valley elderberry, longhorn beetle, Contra Costa wallflower, Antioch primrose.

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: Yes; The project will support levee resilience and provide habitat-sensitive public access for residents of Bethel Island, as well as to nearby disadvantaged communities. Once implemented, the restored riparian and wetland systems will improve local water and air quality and increase the flood resilience of the leveed site.
- Tribal Partnerships: John Muir Land Trust (JMLT) is currently reaching out to the tribes identified by the Native American Heritage Commission as having cultural ties to the property to ensure Tribal collaboration and consultation is centered early in project development.
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship, Pathway 8, Align Investments to Maximize Conservation Benefits
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B1.3 C1.1


Solano County
Toland Landing
Emmaton
Noverd
W Twitchell Island Rd
Twitchell Island
Webb Tract
Bradford Island
W Sherman Island Rd
Sherman Island
Sacramento County
N Grant St
Kingsley A
Sherman Island East Levee Rd
Sherman Island Cross Rd
State Highway 160
160
San Joaquin River
Franks Tract SRA
Jersey Island
Taylor Rd
Piper Rd
Jersey Island Rd
Bethel Island
Vacaville
80
Fairfield
5
12
Rio Vista
Dutch Slough
Holland Tract
Contra Costa Canal
Contra Costa County
Antioch
4
Concord
Project
E Cypress Rd
Sandmound Blvd
Sellers Ave
Knightsen
Delta Rd
Delta Rd
Delta Access Regional Recreation Area
680
205
Tracy
580
Livermore
Sunset Rd
Restoration of Hoover Ranch on Bethel Island
Contra Costa County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 11/19/2026

Project Description

The Restoration of Hoover Ranch on Bethel Island (Project) planning project will complete all planning, design, permitting, and community outreach activities needed to implement restoration of emergent wetlands and riparian woodlands on approximately 500 of 600 total acres of diked, subsided land on Bethel Island in the western Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. Specifically, the Project will bring the site to a shovel-ready state for the following implementation activities:

- Halting of subsidence within the project footprint;
- Sequestering carbon and avoiding emissions by rewetting peat soils in managed wetlands;
- Equalizing hydrostatic pressure on levees;
- Improving habitat for special status species;
- Providing safe, habitat-sensitive community access to open space on Bethel Island.

Project Funding

The proposed funding breakdown for the Project is as follows:

Project Task	WCB	Non-WCB Funds	Totals
Project Management	$194,257	$52,738	$246,995
Planning & Design	$1,051,000	$388,700	$1,439,700
CEQA & Permitting	$198,221	$211,279	$409,500
Indirect Costs	$215,522	$97,908	$313,430
Total	$1,659,000	$750,625	$2,409,625

Non-WCB funders include:

- JMLT - $250,625
- Delta Conservancy - $500,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Christopher Cabaldon, California State Senator, Third Senatorial District
- Candace Andersen, Chair, Board of Supervisors, Contra Costa County
- Lori D. Wilson, Assemblymember, 11th District

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

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 Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Christopher Cabaldon, District 3
- Assembly: Assemblymember Lori D. Wilson, District 11

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the WCB approve this project as proposed, authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project, and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.



Hoover Ranch site on Bethel Island



Sunset from Bethel Island levee

California State Senate
SENATOR
CHRISTOPHER CABALDON
THIRD SENATORIAL DISTRICT

CAPITOL OFFICE
1021 O STREET, SUITE 7320
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814
(916) 651-4003

DISTRICT OFFICE
420 VIRGINIA STREET, SUITE 1-C
VALLEJO, CA 94590
TEL (707) 551-2389

SENATOR.CABALDON@SENATE.CA.GOV

COMMITTEES
BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE 4
CHAIR
APPROPRIATIONS
EDUCATION
HOUSING
LOCAL GOVERNMENT
JOINT COMMITTEE
RULES

Wildlife Conservation Board
715 P Street, 17th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Attention: Dr. Jennifer Norris, Executive Director

Dear Dr. Norris,

I am writing in strong support of John Muir Land Trust's proposal to restore wetland and riparian habitat and enhance public access at the 600-acre Hoover Ranch on Bethel Island in Contra Costa County. This restoration project offers a timely and important opportunity to advance the region's ecological health, build long-term climate resilience, and expand equitable access to open space in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. John Muir Land Trust has a proven record of permanently protecting and stewarding close to 5,000 acres in Contra Costa County and is well positioned to lead this project from planning through long-term management.

Like other wetland restoration projects in the Delta, this effort will contribute to biodiversity by reestablishing native habitat and supporting special status species. It will also benefit climate resilience with new wetland habitat to help adapt to both sea level rise and flooding caused by extreme weather. Sequestering carbon on nearly 500 of the 600 acres will also deliver significant air quality benefits.

John Muir Land Trust's restoration project at Hoover Ranch aligns with the Delta Stewardship Council's Delta Plan, including state and regional water priorities, and directly benefits the safety and well-being of nearby residents - many of whom live in disadvantaged, climate-vulnerable areas - by creating habitat-sensitive access for families to enjoy recreating in a beautiful natural area on the water.

I strongly encourage the Wildlife Conservation Board to support this proposal. Restoring Hoover Ranch will yield enduring benefits for the Delta's environment and communities and represents a sound investment in the future of this unique and vital region. If you have additional questions, please reach out to me at (530) 750-7917.

Sincerely,



Senator Christopher Cabaldon
Senator, District 3

The Board of Supervisors

County Administration Building
1025 Escobar St., 4th floor
Martinez, California 94553

John Gioia, 1st District
Candace Andersen, 2nd District
Diane Burgis, 3rd District
Ken Carlson, 4th District
Shanelle Scales-Preston, 5th District

Contra Costa County

Monica Nino
Clerk of the Board
and
County Administrator
(925) 655-2075

August 6, 2025

Wildlife Conservation Board
Attn: Dr. Jennifer Norris
715 P Street, 17th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: **Support for John Muir Land Trust's Hoover Ranch Restoration Project**

Dear Dr. Norris and Board Members:

On behalf of the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors, I write in support of the John Muir Land Trust's project to restore and permanently steward the 600-acre Hoover Ranch on Bethel Island in Contra Costa County.

The John Muir Land Trust (JMLT) is a trusted partner in permanently protecting lands in Contra Costa County and successfully acquired the property in 2024 thanks in large part to a grant from your agency. JMLT is now focused on planning, design, implementation and monitoring of established wetlands and riparian forest. The Hoover Ranch acquisition and restoration project will enrich biodiversity, enhance climate resilience, and provide public access in alignment with the Wildlife Conservation Board's mission.

Hoover Ranch is home to abundant wildlife – including special status species. By protecting the natural habitat and wildlife at Hoover Ranch, the project will help to ensure that the unique, natural beauty and biodiversity of the Delta remains. The Bay Delta, including Bethel Island, has faced environmental challenges, including subsidence, resulting in significant greenhouse gas emissions and contributing to poor air quality. JMLT's proposed restoration, and permanent protection and stewardship of Hoover Ranch offers key solutions to these challenges.

JMLT's Hoover Ranch project will help to halt and reverse subsidence, protect and restore the Delta ecosystem, and improve regional air quality through carbon sequestration. The Hoover Ranch acquisition will also contribute to the quality of life for nearby residents by maintaining the tranquil, rural environment residents enjoy and creating access for safe, passive recreation in a region with a great deal of development in recent years.

Considering the numerous benefits of JMLT's project to restore Hoover Ranch, we strongly urge your support of this proposal.

Thank you for your consideration of this project.

Sincerely,



CANDACE ANDERSEN
Chair, Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors
Monica Nino, County Administrator
Jami Morritt, Chief Assistant Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
John Kopchick, Conservation and Development Department Director

STATE CAPITOL
P.O. BOX 942849
SACRAMENTO, CA 94249-0011
(916) 319-2011
FAX (916) 319-2111

DISTRICT OFFICE
ONE HARBOR CENTER, SUITE 270
SUISUN CITY, CA 94585
(707) 438-7359
FAX (707) 438-7344

Assembly
California Legislature

LORI D. WILSON
CHAIR, TRANSPORTATION
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, ELEVENTH DISTRICT

COMMITTEES
HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
LOCAL GOVERNMENT
PRIVACY AND CONSUMER PROTECTION
PUBLIC SAFETY
BUDGET
BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE NO. 4 ON CLIMATE CRISIS, RESOURCES, ENERGY, AND TRANSPORTATION

SELECT COMMITTEE
CHAIR, TRANSPORTATION AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

CHAIR, CALIFORNIA LEGISLATIVE BLACK CAUCUS

April 16, 2024

Wildlife Conservation Board
715 P Street, 17th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Attention: Dr. Jennifer Norris, Executive Director

Re: Letter of Support for Hoover Ranch, Bethel Island Wetland Restoration

Dear Dr. Norris,

I am writing in support of John Muir Land Trust's proposal to permanently protect and restore wetland habitat and create public access to the 600-acre Hoover Ranch on Bethel Island in Contra Costa County. This project – like other wetland restoration work in the Delta - will enrich biodiversity and provide vital climate resilience by reducing and reversing subsidence, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and stabilizing pressure on levees that border the property. This project will also contribute to the well-being of residents and the public by providing access to open land for habitat-sensitive recreation.

The Delta, including Bethel Island, has faced environmental challenges related to population increase in the region, subsidence that has impacted the long-term survival of most Delta islands, and significant greenhouse gas emissions from rich peat soil, contributing to poor air quality that affects the region and state. John Muir Land Trust's wetland restoration of Hoover Ranch offers key solutions to these challenges. Their history and track record of permanent protection and stewardship of lands in Contra Costa County make them a trustworthy steward for the land in perpetuity. Hoover Ranch is home to abundant wildlife – including special status species. By protecting the natural habitat and wildlife at Hoover Ranch, JMLT will help to ensure that the unique, natural beauty and biodiversity of the Delta remains. The planned restoration - establishing wetlands and enhancing existing riparian forest - will reduce and reverse subsidence and the harmful greenhouse gases it produces. It will have the added benefit of equalizing pressure on both sides of the levees that border the property, reducing the possibility of levee failure. This project will also importantly contribute to the quality of life for those who call Bethel Island home by maintaining the tranquil, rural environment residents enjoy and creating access for habitat-sensitive recreation.

I strongly recommend supporting their proposal. This important project will help the county and the state, serving all who call the Delta and California home.

Sincerely,

LORI D. WILSON
Assemblymember 11th District

24. Point Reyes National Seashore Implementation **Restoration Implementation**

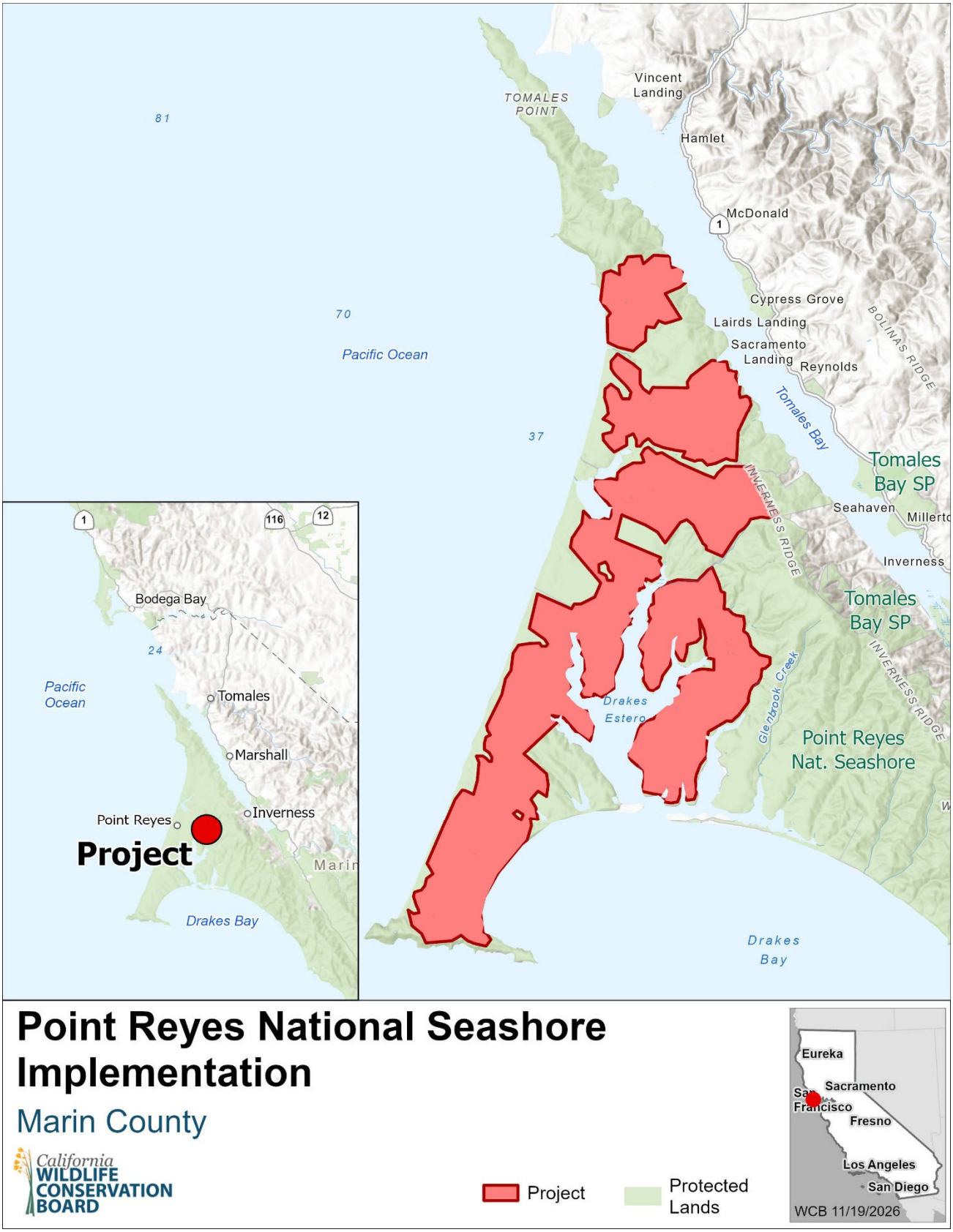
WCB Grant: $7,293,128
Fund Source(s): General Fund, Budget Act of 2024, Point Reyes (SB 108, Sec. 106(1)(4))
Grantee: The Nature Conservancy
Landowner: The National Park Service (NPS)
Location: Seven miles west of Point Reyes Station
County: Marin

Project Highlights

- Implement a grazing plan for 16,000 acres of coastal grasslands
- Install flexible water infrastructure
- Set up a virtual fencing system
- Maintain habitat mosaic of grasslands, shrublands, and riparian vegetation
- Reduce invasive plant cover
- Encourage rare native plant growth
- Increase public stewardship and engagement

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: Yes. The Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria (FIGR) has a co-stewardship agreement with the NPS at Point Reyes National Seashore. They are a key partner and will be regularly consulted in the design of long-term management, restoration, and cultural resource stewardship.
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B1.1, B3.3, B3.4, C1.2


Vincent Landing
TOMALES POINT
Hamlet
McDonald
Cypress Grove
Lairds Landing
Sacramento Landing
Reynolds
BOLINAS RIDGE
Tomales Bay
Tomales Bay SP
Seahaven
Inverness
INVERNESS RIDGE
Tomales Bay SP
Glenbrook Creek
Drakes Estero
Point Reyes Nat. Seashore
Drakes Bay
Pacific Ocean
81
70
37
Bodega Bay
24
Pacific Ocean
Tomales
Marshall
Point Reyes
Inverness
Project
Drakes Bay
Point Reyes National Seashore Implementation
Marin County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 11/19/2026

Project Description

Point Reyes National Seashore (PRNS) is an ecologically significant coastal landscape known for its biodiversity and deep cultural history. The grasslands of outer PRNS are undergoing significant landscape-level changes following the departure of historic cattle operations. The resulting changes in grazing pressures require new grazing landscape management. The landscapes at PRNS are highly diverse with multiple coastal habitats including interior dunes, wetlands, riparian zones, shrublands, and remnant patches of rare, native coastal prairie. Not only are grasslands among the least protected and most rapidly disappearing natural ecosystems on Earth, but California's coastal prairie is among the most biodiverse grassland habitats in North America. Native tule elk currently occupy parts of PRNS, and the removal of fencelines will allow them to expand in range and numbers, to move across the landscape, and aid in the maintenance of this complex mosaic of habitat types.

The Project will implement a grazing plan and virtual fencing system to increase landscape health by:

- Developing a public stewardship plan
- Installing virtual fencing system covering 16,000 acres to allow targeted and managed grazing
- Removing internal physical fencelines to increase habitat connectivity
- Creating a mobile water infrastructure system to improve grazing management

Long-Term Management

The Nature Conservancy adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the Project, including management of the property. If at any time during the 20-year life of the Project's Long-Term Management Period, Grantee 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	Totals
Project Management	$1,018,697	---	$1,018,697
Targeted Grazing Program	$4,527,950	---	$4,527,950
Public Stewardship Program	$331,900	---	$331,900
Restoration Capacity	$225,000	---	$225,000
Indirect Costs	$1,189,581	---	$1,189,581
Total	$7,293,128	---	$7,293,128

Non-WCB funders include:

- None

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Greg Sarris, Chairman, Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria
- Dennis Rodoni, District 4 Supervisor, County of Marin
- Jun Bando, PhD, Executive Director, California Native Plant Society
- Donna Faure, Executive Director, Point Reyes National Seashore Association
- Thomas Gardali, CEO, All Hands Ecology

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

The San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board, as lead agency, prepared a Negative Declaration (ND) for the project pursuant to the provisions of the CEQA. Staff considered the ND and prepared proposed, written findings documenting WCB's compliance with CEQA. Subject to approval of this proposal by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Determination will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Mike McGuire, District 2
- Assembly: Assemblymember Damon Connolly, District 12

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the WCB adopt the CEQA findings and approve this project as proposed, authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project, and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE
IMPLEMENTATION
MARIN
2026118

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT FINDINGS

INTRODUCTION

The California Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) has prepared these findings to document its compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Pub. Resources Code, § 21000 *et seq*.). (See Pub. Resources Code, § 21081, and CEQA Guidelines §§ 15091, 15096 subd. (h).)[1] WCB is a responsible agency under CEQA with respect to the Conditional Waiver of WDRs for Grazing Operations in the North S F Bay Region (Project) because of WCB's granting authority under the following provisions:

Authority: Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947, Chapter 4.0 commencing with section 1300, et seq., of the California Fish and Game Code, relating to habitat enhancement and restoration. Fund Source: General Fund, Budget Act of 2024, Point Reyes (SB 108, Sec. 106(1)(4)).

(See generally Pub. Resources Code, §§ 21002.1 subd. (d), 21069; CEQA Guidelines, § 15381.)

WCB makes these findings as part of its discretionary decision to award a grant, under the terms and conditions specified in Grant Agreement No. #2026118 (Grant Agreement), to The Nature Conservancy (Grantee) to fund the activity(ies) described below which will take place in Marin County. WCB is a responsible agency under CEQA with respect to the Project because of prior environmental review and approval of the Project by the Lead Agency, San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board (Lead Agency). (See generally Pub. Resources Code, § 21067; CEQA Guidelines, §15367.) The Lead Agency prepared an Initial Study considering the environmental impacts associated with implementation of the Project. The Lead Agency adopted the Negative Declaration (ND) (State Clearinghouse No. 2025020871) prepared for the Project and approved the Project on July 9, 2025. In so doing, the Lead Agency concluded that there was no substantial evidence, in light of the record as a whole, that the Project may have a significant effect on the environment.

[1] The CEQA Guidelines are found in Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, commencing with section 15000.

As approved by the Lead Agency, the Project involves grazing permits to regulate grazing operations in the Napa River, Sonoma Creek, Petaluma River, and Tamales Bay watersheds, and all grazing operations in Point Reyes National Seashore. The program establishes conditions for grazing operations to minimize and control discharges of animal waste and sediment runoff, including the following: evaluation of operating practices; identification of comprehensive site-specific pathogen and sediment control measures; development of a schedule for the implementation of management actions; and annual reporting on actions taken.

As a responsible agency, WCB's CEQA obligations are more limited than those of a lead agency. WCB is responsible for considering only the effects of those activities that it is required by law to carry out, finance, or approve (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002.1 subd. (d); CEQA Guidelines, § 15041 subd. (b)). Accordingly, because WCB's exercise of discretion is to fund the entire Project which is, in all material respects, identical to what is described by the Lead Agency summarized above, WCB is responsible for considering the environmental effects that may result from that action. Moreover, with respect to all other environmental effects of the Project, if any, WCB is bound by the legal presumption that the ND adopted by Lead Agency fully complies with CEQA. (See Pub. Resources Code, §§ 21080.1 subd. (a); CEQA Guidelines, § 15096 subd. (e), *City of Redding v. Shasta County Local Agency Formation Commission* (1989) 209 Cal.App.3d at pp. 1178-1181; *Laurel Heights Improvement Association v. Regents of the University of California* (1993) 6 Cal.4th 1112, 1130.)

FINDINGS: General

CEQA requires that responsible agencies must review and consider the negative declaration prepared by the lead agency, consider the environmental effects of the proposed project as shown in the negative declaration, and reach its own conclusions on whether and how to approve the project involved. (CEQA Guidelines, § 15096.)

These Findings are also intended to comply with the requirement that there is no substantial evidence in the record of proceedings (see section below) that the project may have a significant effect on the environment. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21064, CEQA Guideline, § 15070.) To that end, these findings support WCB's decision under CEQA to have: considered, within WCB's limited discretion as a responsible agency, the ND prepared by the Lead Agency; considered the environmental effects shown in the ND; and, reached the conclusion to award WCB's grant and execute the Grant Agreement.

FINDINGS: Environmental Effects

In adopting the ND and approving the Project, the Lead Agency prepared an Initial Study. That Initial Study showed that there was no substantial evidence, in light of the record as a whole, that the Project may have a significant effect on the environment.

WCB has considered the ND adopted by the LA with respect to the Project within the scope of its responsible agency authority. WCB, applying its independent judgment, finds that there is no evidence that its approval of the Project will result in a significant effect on the environment in light of the record as a whole.

WCB has reached this conclusion about there being no significant effect on the environment because the activities being implemented (grazing techniques, removal of fencing, water infrastructure improvement) are intended to transition the property from dairy cattle operations to more natural habitat types. The project will address changes in grazing pressures on the landscape and allow for the maintenance of the rare coastal prairie habitat that supports numerous other native species, some of which are endemic to this region.

WCB further finds that allocation of a grant for the Project and execution of the Grant Agreement will not result in any previously undisclosed potentially significant effects on the environment or a substantial increase in the severity of any potentially significant environmental effects previously disclosed by the Lead Agency.

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

These Findings are supported by substantial evidence in WCB's administrative record of proceedings. In general, WCB's administrative record includes the following:

1) The Lead Agency's Initial Study and ND;
2) All other public records, including public comments, made available by the Lead Agency;
3) Grant proposal (Full Application) Grantee submitted to WCB;
4) Staff reports prepared by WCB;
5) Records of the meeting at which WCB's Board approved the grant to Grantee;
6) Grant Agreement executed by WCB and Grantee;
7) All non-privileged correspondence received by WCB regarding the Project;
8) All applicable statutes and regulations, including, but not limited to, those cited herein;
9) Various other documents regarding the Project in WCB files; and,
10) Other relevant non-exempt or non-privileged documents described by Public Resources Code, § 21167.6, subdivision (e).

WCB is the custodian of its administrative record. The administrative record is located at 715 P Street, 17th floor, Sacramento, and all inquiries regarding the administrative record should be directed to WCB's Legal Office at (916) 445-8448.

WCB considered and relied on all of the documents listed above in exercising its independent judgment and reaching its decision with respect to the Project, even if not every document was formally presented to WCB or its staff. (See *City of Santa Cruz v. Local Agency Formation Comm.* (1978) 76 Cal.App.3d 381, 391-392; *Dominey v. Department of Personnel Administration* (1988) 205 Cal.App.3d 729, 738, fn. 6.) Other documents influenced the expert advice of WCB

staff, which then provided advice to the decisionmakers at WCB with respect to the grant and Project. For that reason, all such documents form part of the underlying factual basis for WCB's decision related to the grant for the Project. (*Browning-Ferris Industries v. City Council of City of San Jose* (1986) 181 Cal.App.3d 852, 866; *Stanislaus Audubon Society, Inc. v. County of Stanislaus* (1995) 33 Cal.App.4th 144, 153, 155.)

CONCLUSION

WCB adopts these Findings and approves the Project for the purposes of CEQA.

Date:

By: _____
Title: _____

Notice of Determination

To: Office of Planning and Research
State Clearinghouse
1400 Tenth Street, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95814

County Clerk (County of): Yolo

From: **Wildlife Conservation Board**
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 99244-2090

Contact: Alyssa Benedetti
Phone: (916) 212-0691

Lead Agency: California Dept of Fish and Wildlife
Contact: Dave Feliz
Phone: (530) 757-2431

SUBJECT: Filing Notice of Determination in compliance with Section 21108 or 21152 of the Public Resources Code.

State Clearinghouse Number (If submitted by State Clearinghouse): 2007072099

Project Title: Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Final Land Management Plan

Project Location: Yolo County, between Davis and West Sacramento

CEQA Region: N. CA

Project Description:

The Project will improve infrastructure for hunting and wildlife recreation at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area, including 24 new or replacement blinds, an accessible hiking trail, and designs for two ADA observation decks. WCB Project Tracker ID: 2026075.

This is to advise that the project on 11/19/26 Wildlife Conservation Board has approved the above-described and has made the following determinations regarding the above-described project.

☐ **Lead Agency** ☑ **Responsible Agency**

1. The Project [☐ will ☑ will not] have a significant effect on the environment.
2. ☐ An environmental Impact Report was prepared for this project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.
   ☑ A Negative Declaration was prepared for this project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.
3. Mitigation Measures [☐ were ☑ were not] made a condition of WCB's approval of the project.
4. A mitigation reporting or monitoring plan [☐ was ☑ was not] adopted by WCB for this project.
5. A statement of Overriding Considerations [☐ was ☑ was not] adopted by WCB for this project.
6. Findings [☑ were ☐ were not] made by WCB pursuant to the provision of CEQA.

This is to certify that the Negative Declaration with comments and responses and record of the project approval is available to the General Public at: 45211 County Rd 32B, Davis, CA 95616

Signature: **Title:** Deputy Executive Director **Date:**

SCH#: 2007072099

Posted:
Date Received for Filing:

ec: WCB Project Tracker
WCB Board Meeting Folder



One of the many internal fence lines that impede wildlife movement across the Point Reyes landscape and that will be removed as part of this project. Virtual fencing will be used to move cattle across the landscape to maintain habitat complexity.



Aging, stationary, and abandoned water infrastructure needs to be replaced with modern, mobile, and active infrastructure to all more flexibility in grazing management to reduce the impacts of invasive plant species and maintain a complex mosaic of habitat types.

FEDERATED INDIANS OF
GRATON
RANCHERIA

October 26, 2026

Wildlife Conservation Board
Seventeenth Floor
715 P Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
United States

Re: Letter of Support for WCB Funding, FY2026/27 - "Point Reyes National Seashore - Conservation Implementation"

Dear Board Members,

I write on behalf of the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria (FIGR) in support of The Nature Conservancy's (TNC) application for Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) funding for the project titled "Point Reyes National Seashore - Conservation Implementation."

FIGR is a sovereign nation and federally recognized Indian tribe comprised of Coast Miwok and Southern Pomo peoples, whose ancestral territory includes Marin and Sonoma Counties. FIGR maintains a General Agreement with the National Park Service (NPS) for government-to-government partnership at PRNS and has been part of ongoing coordination with NPS and TNC regarding future management and restoration of the project area.

FIGR supports the project's commitment to collaborative stewardship and to integrating Tribal cultural resource protection into long-term land management. In coordination with FIGR, project implementation will address methods and conditions for identifying and protecting Tribal cultural resources during fencing and water infrastructure work; mapping Tribal cultural resources to inform project-related management decisions; and the study of ethnobotanical species to inform vegetation restoration and management. The project will support targeted grazing, wildlife-friendly fence repair and removal, water infrastructure improvements, native seed amplification, monitoring, and adaptive management to improve water quality, grassland ecosystem health, wildlife connectivity, and long-term restoration capacity across the PRNS project area.

Given the above, FIGR is pleased to support TNC's project application and looks forward to continued government-to-government coordination with NPS and collaboration with TNC and other partners to advance cultural resource protection, ecological restoration, and long-term stewardship across PRNS.

Sincerely,

Greg Sarris

Greg Sarris, Chairman

COUNTY OF MARIN

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
DENNIS RODONI
Fourth District

Marin County Civic Center
3501 Civic Center Drive
Suite 329
San Rafael, CA 94903
415 473 7331 T
415 473 3645 F
415 473 6172 TTY
Dennis.Rodoni@marincounty.gov
MarinCounty.gov/board

November 4, 2026

Wildlife Conservation Board
Seventeenth Floor
715 P Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for The Nature Conservancy's Point Reyes National Seashore – Conservation Implementation Project

Dear Wildlife Conservation Board Members,

I am writing to express my support for The Nature Conservancy's Point Reyes National Seashore – Conservation Implementation project that will support native habitat and wildlife while protecting water quality and managing sensitive resources across roughly 16,000 acres in Marin County. TNC under the National Park Service's authority and in partnership with local organizations will steward these 16,000 acres of land with the primary objectives of supporting ecosystem health, climate resilience, and public engagement in one of the most visited U.S. national parks.

Point Reyes National Seashore is one of the largest contiguous, protected coastal areas left in California and Marin County's most important public landscapes. In addition to supporting the health of native habitats and wildlife, this project will create meaningful opportunities for public engagement, education, and stewardship. Through partnerships with local organizations, volunteers, and public agencies, county residents and other visitors will have opportunities to participate in hands-on stewardship activities that strengthen connections to one of Marin County's most treasured public landscapes. Further, modifications to fencing will support new opportunities to expand public access across this portion of the seashore. This project is exactly the type of multi-benefit, partnership-based investment envisioned by Marin County's 2026 Legislative Platform: protecting water quality and native species, strengthening climate resilience, enhancing public connection to nature, and investing in public lands.

I urge you to support the proposed funding for the Point Reyes National Seashore – Conservation Implementation project.

Respectfully,

Sincerely,

Dennis Rodoni, County of Marin, District 4 Supervisor

CALIFORNIA
NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY
2707 K Street, Suite 1, Sacramento, CA 95816-5130 (916) 447.2677 www.cnps.org

Protecting
California's native
flora since 1965

October 26, 2026

Dr. Jennifer Norris, Executive Director
Wildlife Conservation Board
Seventeenth Floor
715 P Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Support for Point Reyes National Seashore – Conservation Implementation Project

Dear Dr. Norris,

On behalf of the California Native Plant Society (CNPS), I am writing to express strong support for The Nature Conservancy's (TNC's) application for Wildlife Conservation Board funding for the Point Reyes National Seashore – Conservation Implementation Project.

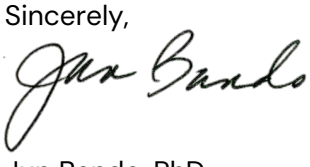
CNPS is a nonprofit organization with a mission to protect California's native plants and their natural habitats. We represent more than 13,000 members across California and 35 chapters, including our local Marin Chapter. We have a strong and active partnership with TNC, through which we contribute botanical expertise to TNC-led stewardship and restoration initiatives in areas of conservation significance, including the Dangermond Preserve and Point Reyes National Seashore.

We support TNC's vision for working with the National Park Service and Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria to revitalize areas of Point Reyes National Seashore in ways that advance ecosystem health, climate resilience, and public access. Point Reyes National Seashore is one of California most important coastal areas for biodiversity, supporting more than 600 species of native plants and approximately 10 percent of California's botanical diversity, including more than 50 rare, threatened, or endangered plant species.

Restoring and conserving habitats at the National Seashore that have been degraded by agricultural activities and invasive species will require active stewardship, monitoring, and adaptive management. The proposed project will support the implementation and evaluation of targeted grazing strategies designed to benefit native plants, wildlife, and overal ecosystem function, and will generate insights to inform future management decisions in Point Reyes and similar landscapes in the region.

CNPS strongly supports funding for this important project and respectfully urges the Wildlife Conservation Board to approve this request. Thank you for your consideration and for your continued commitment to conserving California's natural heritage.

Sincerely,



Jun Bando, PhD
Executive Director
California Native Plant Society

August 11, 2026

Wildlife Conservation Board
Seventeenth Floor
715 P Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
United States

Re: Letter of Support for WCB Funding, FY2026/27 – "Point Reyes National Seashore – Conservation Implementation"

Dear WCB Grants Administrator,

On behalf of Point Reyes National Seashore Association (PRNSA), please accept this letter of support for The Nature Conservancy's (TNC) application for Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) funding for the project titled, *Point Reyes National Seashore – Conservation Implementation*. This project would support a new phase of conservation implementation across roughly 16,000 acres of Point Reyes National Seashore (PRNS).

PRNSA works directly with the National Park Service (NPS) as its primary nonprofit partner, and this project includes funding to support expanded volunteer programming that advances conservation outcomes for grassland and ecosystem health. Having led volunteer events in the park for decades, our team is excited to help create new opportunities for a range of community members to participate in meaningful stewardship activities. By connecting volunteers directly with on-the-ground restoration and monitoring efforts, the project will foster greater public investment in and care for the long-term stewardship of PRNS. Specifically, our organization is prepared to lead volunteers in supporting NPS priorities such as the safe decommissioning and removal of interior fencing, early detection and rapid response for priority invasive plant populations, rare plant monitoring to inform grazing management, and invasive plant removal.

We understand this letter does not represent any commitment to WCB funding, nor does it give rise to any legal entitlement. The decision on funding will be based on review of the full application and the outcome of the WCB grant application process. Given the above, we are pleased to support this project application and look forward to working with TNC, NPS, and other partners to advance conservation outcomes and public stewardship opportunities across the park. I am happy to answer questions at (415) 697-9180
donnaf@ptreyes.org.

Please feel free to call me with any questions about this letter and our organization at donnaf@ptreyes.org or (415) 697-9180.

Sincerely,

Donna Faure

Donna Faure
Executive Director

All Hands ECOLOGY

For all that connects us.

October 29, 2026

Wildlife Conservation Board
Seventeenth Floor
715 P Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Support for the Point Reyes National Seashore – Conservation Implementation Project

Wildlife Conservation Board,

On behalf of All Hands Ecology, I support The Nature Conservancy's application for Wildlife Conservation Board funding for the Point Reyes National Seashore – Conservation Implementation project. We urge the Board to fund this work.

All Hands Ecology is a nonprofit organization that connects nature, people, and science for a more resilient world. For over 60 years, we have stewarded our 25 preserves in Marin and Sonoma counties. This experience has shown us the importance of active, ongoing care for the land, including conservation grazing and beneficial fire to restore and steward our ecological communities.

Our experience with conservation grazing informs our support for this project's focus on careful, adaptively managed grazing. Successful grazing-based stewardship requires both infrastructure and focused ecological monitoring. We are excited to see virtual fencing, water infrastructure improvements, and thoughtful fencing upgrades and retirements included in the project. Together, these investments and monitoring provide a foundation for adapting land management to ecological conditions.

This project has great potential to improve ecological function in the Point Reyes National Seashore, including the health of our threatened coastal prairies, and to improve water quality. Its commitment to learning through science and observation can inform ongoing improvements in local land management. That learning can also contribute to better management throughout the region and beyond.

We urge the Wildlife Conservation Board to approve the proposed funding for the Point Reyes National Seashore – Conservation Implementation project to enable the adaptive stewardship this project supports.

Sincerely,

Thomas Gardali, CEO
All Hands Ecology
tgardali@allhandsecology.org

JARED HUFFMAN
2ND DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

WASHINGTON OFFICE
2330 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
PHONE: (202) 225–5161

WEBSITE: huffman.house.gov

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515–0502

COMMITTEE ON
NATURAL RESOURCES
RANKING MEMBER

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE

November 11, 2026

Dr. Jennifer Norris, Executive Director
Wildlife Conservation Board
Seventeenth Floor
715 P Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for The Nature Conservancy's Point Reyes National Seashore – Conservation Implementation Project

Dear Dr. Norris:

I am writing to express my support for The Nature Conservancy's (TNC) Point Reyes National Seashore – Conservation Implementation Project that will support native habitat and wildlife while protecting water quality and managing sensitive resources across roughly 16,000 acres in the Point Reyes National Seashore. TNC under the National Park Service's authority will steward these 16,000 acres of land with the primary objectives of supporting ecosystem health, climate resilience, and public access in one of the most visited U.S. national parks.

Point Reyes National Seashore is one of the largest contiguous, wild coastal areas left in California. Located in one of the 25 regions of the world where biodiversity is most concentrated and most at risk, the park encompasses more than 71,000 acres of vibrant, cherished landscapes and is home to over 100 threatened, rare, and endangered species. It also sustains one of the state's last remaining and largest populations of tule elk, a species that was once wide-ranging across California. This project would support an ecologically focused targeted grazing program including virtual fencing for livestock, wildlife-friendly fence repair and removal, and water system upgrades to support native plant diversity, as well as meaningfully expand native seed collection and amplification efforts, volunteer programming, and research and monitoring efforts.

The conservation objectives of this project are important to increase biodiversity and ecosystem health. The conservation outcomes of this work will benefit grasslands, wetlands and riparian areas, reduce both water use and contamination thus improving aquatic habitat, increase wildlife connectivity, and enable enhanced public access which will continue to benefit the wonderous beauty of the Point Reyes National Seashore.

I urge your full and fair consideration for the proposed funding for the Point Reyes National Seashore – Conservation Implementation Project. Please contact my Senior Advisor and Director of Community Initiatives Jenny Callaway at 415-264-8222 if you need additional information.

Sincerely,

JARED HUFFMAN
Member of Congress

MARIN CONSERVATION LEAGUE

Protecting Marin Since 1934

November 9, 2026

Wildlife Conservation Board
Seventeenth Floor
715 P Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Support for the Point Reyes National Seashore – Conservation Implementation Project

Dear Wildlife Conservation Board,

On behalf of Marin Conservation League (MCL), please accept this letter of support for The Nature Conservancy's (TNC) application for Wildlife Conservation Board funding for the Point Reyes National Seashore – Conservation Implementation project.

Founded in 1934, Marin Conservation League is a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting and enhancing Marin County's natural environment through advocacy, education, and community engagement. MCL has a long history of advocating for the protection of Marin's public lands, native habitats, watersheds, and biodiversity, including the exceptional natural resources of Point Reyes National Seashore.

MCL supports this project's integrated approach to restoring coastal grasslands, protecting sensitive aquatic habitats, and improving wildlife connectivity. We are particularly encouraged by the proposed removal and modification of fencing to facilitate the movement of tule elk and other wildlife, as well as improvements to water infrastructure that will reduce impacts on natural springs, seeps, and riparian habitats. The expansion of native seed collection and restoration capacity is also an important investment in the long-term ecological health of these landscapes.

We support the project's emphasis on science-based implementation, monitoring, and adaptive management. Through targeted grazing enabled by virtual fencing and guided by ecological monitoring, the project offers an opportunity to improve native plant diversity, manage invasive species, and evaluate grazing as a conservation tool. The information generated will help inform future management decisions at Point Reyes and across similar coastal landscapes.

PHONE: 415.485.6257
FAX: 415.485.6259
EMAIL: mcl@marinconservationleague.org
WEB: marinconservationleague.org
ADDRESS: 175 N. Redwood Dr., Ste. 135
San Rafael, CA 94903-1977

MCL strongly supports funding for the Point Reyes National Seashore – Conservation Implementation project and its goals of protecting biodiversity, improving ecosystem resilience, and supporting the long-term stewardship of Marin County's public lands.

Sincerely,



Rebecca Schwartz Lesberg
Executive Director
Marin Conservation League

PHONE: 415.485.6257
FAX: 415.485.6259
EMAIL: mcl@marinconservationleague.org
WEB: marinconservationleague.org
ADDRESS: 175 N. Redwood Dr., Ste. 135
San Rafael, CA 94903-1977

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

BERKELEY • DAVIS • IRVINE • LOS ANGELES • MERCED • RIVERSIDE • SAN DIEGO • SAN FRANCISCO SANTA BARBARA • SANTA CRUZ

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE, POLICY & MANAGEMENT
130 MULFORD HALL
BERKELEY, CA 94720-3114
huntsinger@berkeley.edu

PH: (510) 685-1884
http://ourEnvironment.berkeley.edu

Wildlife Conservation Board
Seventeenth Floor
715 P Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Nov. 17, 2026

Re: Support for the Point Reyes National Seashore – Conservation Implementation Project

This letter offers my perspective on the Point Reyes National Seashore – Conservation Implementation Project, based on more than 35 years as professor of rangeland ecology and management at the University of California, Berkeley. In the course of my career, it has been my privilege to get to know many ranching families and members of the ranching community in California. I was disappointed by the removal of the ranching and dairy families and the loss of their contributions to the stewardship of Point Reyes National Seashore. The fact remains, however, that livestock grazing is a critical ecological process needed to retain the outstanding biodiversity and spectacular landscapes of the Seashore. The Seashore's flora and fauna did not evolve with the many non-native species at Point Reyes. The suppression of cultural burning has also led to a loss of grasslands. Livestock grazing can be managed to help mitigate the impact of these changes. I was pleased to discover that The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is committed to working with Tribal partners on cultural resources stewardship and on restoring management practices that can promote ecological health, limit shrub encroachment, and maintain the landscape. I submit this letter to support The Nature Conservancy's (TNC) application for Wildlife Conservation Board funding for this project.

I have observed TNC's work throughout California and have found them adept at working with landowners, agencies, scientists, and the public. Their working lands program is perhaps the most extensive in the world, and in the United States it has resulted in the most widespread conservation of privately owned working lands that I know of. The webinar they produced, *Stewarding Point Reyes' Grasslands: A Framework for Targeted Grazing* (Aug. 12, 2026), is a wonderful example of the use of scientific findings to frame the problem and explain how it will be addressed. Believe it or not, conservation programs that use research-based information are not that common, because too often fads or the need for donations are most prominent in decision-making. As an educator and researcher, I believe in TNC's use of good information and good relationships to build conservation programs. The public benefits of their adaptive management approach include the opportunity to see ecological research and management outcomes interpreted at the Seashore.

I support this project's emphasis on adaptively managed targeted grazing enabled by virtual fencing, water infrastructure improvements, fencing upgrades and removal, and complementary monitoring efforts. Adaptive management research models are designed to answer questions about the outcomes of management initiatives and to produce information useful for future management, adapting to new information as they proceed. The implementation of state-of-the-knowledge targeted grazing practices

and well-designed monitoring efforts to measure ecosystem response will generate valuable information on effective targeted grazing practices, vegetation response, water quality, tule elk populations, and federally listed plant species. This information will help evaluate project effectiveness and inform future management decisions across this and similar landscapes in the region.

These are some of the reasons I support the proposed funding for the Point Reyes National Seashore – Conservation Implementation Project and the resource management and any other beneficial outcomes that will be made possible through this project.

Sincerely,



Lynn Huntsinger
Professor Emeritus and Professor of the Graduate School
Environmental Science, Policy, and Management
University of California, Berkeley

25. Golden Gate Fields **Acquisition**
WCB Grant: $53,000,000 **Fee**
Fund Source(s): Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024 (Proposition 4 – Existing Programs), Public Resources Code Section 93010 (AB 113, Sec. 96, Item 1.1(a))
Grantee: East Bay Regional Parks District (EBRPD)Location: Within Albany and Berkeley
County: Alameda
Acres: 162± (Property)

Project Highlights

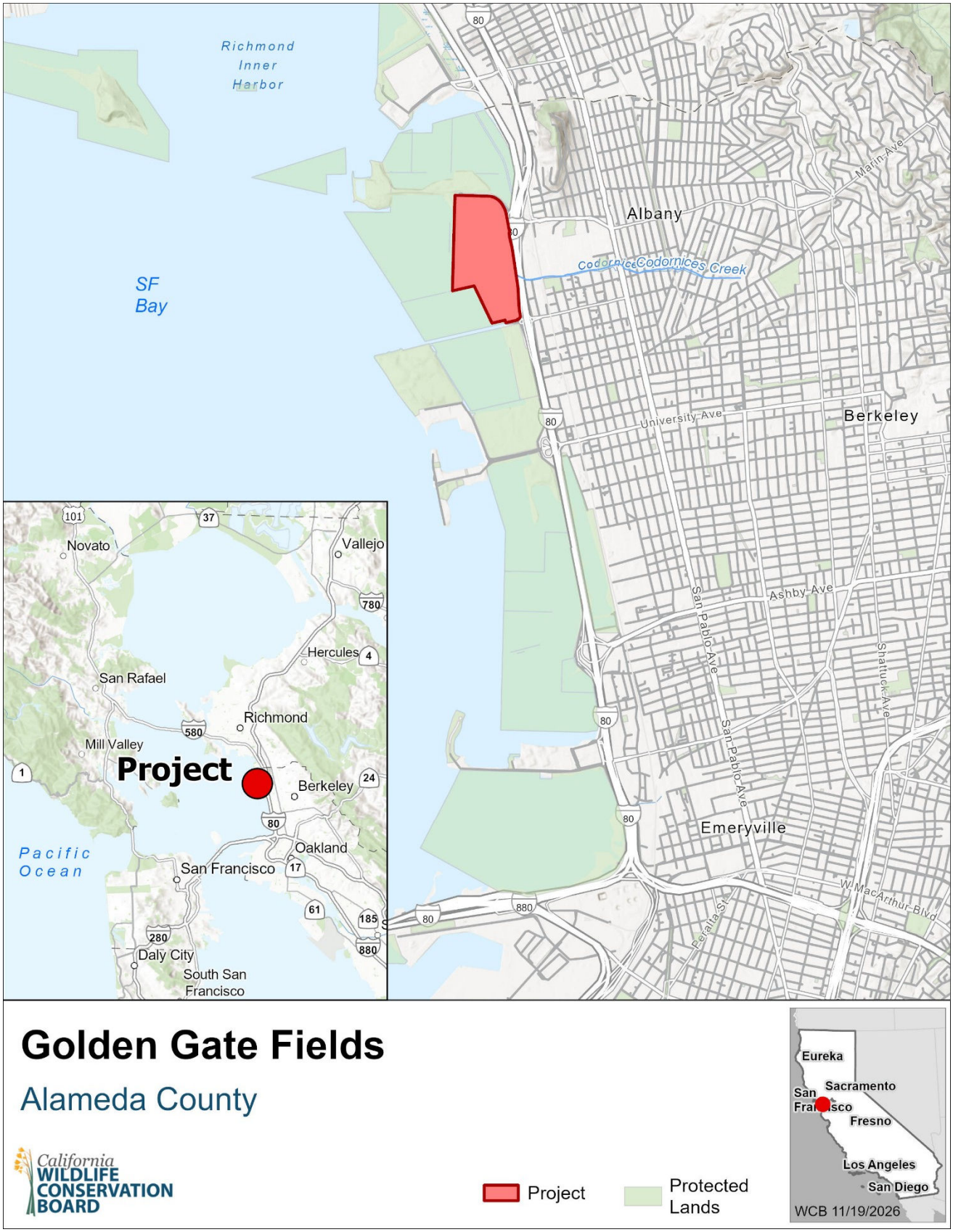
- The site is a former horse racetrack facility that was built in the early 20th century. The racetrack was built by reclaiming the San Francisco Bay with debris from Point Fleming, a rocky promontory about 1/3 mile offshore, and on which the grandstand was constructed. The southern 1/3 of the Property, comprised of the stable area, was likely created, in the early 20th century, by filling the bay with material that may include Berkeley's municipal waste and incinerated waste debris. The northern portion of the Property was likely filled in the 1950's. Construction of the racetrack and Eastshore Highway, now Interstate 80, and other infrastructure destroyed the natural mudflats, tidal marsh, dunes, beach and tidal flat ecosystems that existed prior to development.
- Acquisition of the Property presents an opportunity to create, restore, and enhance wildlife habitat and to provide public recreation. Public recreational opportunities may include youth sports fields and urban park amenities including commercial uses. There is an existing Verizon cell tower lease on the Property which runs through 2034. WCB's grant agreement requires restoration of at least 49.1± acres of the Property.
- Potential future habitats may include:
    - Upland Habitats: Coastal Dune, Coastal Scrub, Maritime Chaparral, Oak Woodland, and Mixed Evergreen Forest;
    - Transitional Ecotones: Beach, Moist Grassland, Coastal Prairie, Coastal Prairie, Coastal Scrub, Willow Groves, and Riparian Forest
    - Marsh
    - Tidal Flats/Channels
- Restoration may also include re-grading the Property and removing fill to rebuild and connect historic flood plains and wetlands, bringing sediment into the site, and facilitating natural geomorphic processes and sea level rise resilience.
- Conservation and restoration of the Property will complete a 10-mile San Francisco Bayland habitat and recreational corridor from Oakland to Richmond, along the San Francisco Bay Trail. The Property connects to CDFW's 160-acre Albany Mudflats

Ecological Reserve, the Albany Bulb, Albany Beach, Tom Bates Sports Complex, and Mcloughlin East Shore State Park State Seashore.

- In its existing state the Property includes 24 acres of estuarine and marine deepwater, approximately 12 acres of estuarine and marine wetland and ponds, and one-half acre of riverine wetland. Common fish, birds, and crustaceans likely use these habitats. A restored site may be suitable habitat for California tiger salamander, Myrtles silverspot butterfly, monarch butterfly, western pond turtle, burrowing owl, loggerhead shrike, white-tailed kite, and northern harrier.

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: Yes. The Property is in a Justice Community, and restoration will reduce the impacts of sea level rise.
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Acquisitions
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B1.1, P1
- Public Access: Yes. EBRPD will prepare a plan to permit wildlife habitat compatible public access on the Property. Prior to restoration, EBRPD will hold events at the Property.


Richmond Inner Harbor
SF Bay
Albany
Codornices Creek
Berkeley
University Ave
Marin Ave
Ashby Ave
San Pablo Ave
Shattuck Ave
Emeryville
W MacArthur Blvd
Pacific Ocean
Novato
Vallejo
Hercules
San Rafael
Richmond
Mill Valley
Project
Berkeley
Oakland
San Francisco
Daly City
South San Francisco
Golden Gate Fields
Alameda County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 11/19/2026

Environmental Condition and Clean Up of Property

Under the purchase agreement for the Property, and assumptions of the appraisal, the seller is responsible for demolishing above grade improvements such as the racetrack, grandstands, stables and dorms within 90-180 days after close of escrow. At grade and below ground infrastructure such as asphalt, concrete, rebar, substructures, and utilities will remain until restoration/park development occurs. WCB's disbursement of funds and close of escrow are contingent upon the seller and EBRPD entering into a Post-Closing Operating Agreement, approved by WCB, which will cover the seller's obligation to complete demolition after EBRPD assumes ownership of the Property. At present, demolition permits from Albany and Berkeley have yet to be approved.

Above ground site reconnaissance and review of historical records indicate that the Property was largely created by filling the bay with rock debris from Fleming Point. The stable area was likely created by reclaiming the bay with fill material that may include municipal waste and incinerated waste debris. A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment dated August 21, 2026, ("Phase I") has been provided to the State and reviewed by the Department of General Services environmental team. The Phase I concluded "no Recognized Environmental Conditions or environmental conditions likely to compromise the purpose of the contemplated transaction/future property use were identified." Subsurface site investigations and/or a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment were not performed pursuant to the terms of the purchase agreement between the Trust for Public Land (TPL) and the seller.

Two areas are known to require remediation prior to future redevelopment of the Property, including residual hydrocarbons from the historic underground storage tank area at the corporation yard, and low concentrations of lead and mercury in the soil in the southern area likely filled by municipal waste and incinerated waste debris. Lead and mercury levels detected are below the action level for human exposure, although mercury levels are above the threshold risk concentrations for ecologic health. This contaminated soil is presently capped by stable infrastructure and hardscape and there is no complete ecologic exposure pathway; accordingly, at present, shallow soil is effectively managed in place. However, the Phase I concluded that, at a minimum, "[s]hallow soil in the southern stable area will require management [ ] during and following redevelopment of this area for public use." Further analysis, design/engineering and consultation with regulatory agencies is required to determine appropriate management actions to address these issues. Management actions may include removing shallow soil, replacing the hardscape with cover such as a parking lot, engineered soil cap (like caps over landfills used as parks/recreational facilities), or constructed playing field such as at the Tom Bates Regional Sports Complex.

Estimates range from $6 million to $15 million to complete this work. The range is attributable to different assumptions on the scope of regulatory agency engagement, site assessment screening methodology, and solutions to remediate hydrocarbons and heavy metals. Pursuant to an agreement between the seller and EBRPD, the seller will transfer $8.25 million dollars to EBPRD to purchase an environmental liability insurance policy, conduct further environmental investigations, and remediate known issues. The environmental liability insurance policy will provide coverage for unknown environmental contamination, i.e. those conditions not identified in the Phase I environmental site assessment. The policy will exclude from coverage lead and mercury contamination anywhere on the Property and hydrocarbons within the corporation yard footprint north of turns three and four on the racetrack.

It is important to note that this transaction is unique for WCB. WCB grant funded projects for acquisition of properties with known environmental contamination, routinely require subsurface testing to fully characterize the extent of contamination. WCB also requires a Remedial Action Plan (RAP) approved by a regulatory agency, and appropriate monetary holdbacks in escrow or financial guarantees from the seller (ex. bonding) to ensure implementation of the RAP. This is to protect the state's investment by ensuring the property owner is not obligated to incur additional clean up expenses that could hinder or prevent them from accomplishing the purposes of grant. If cleanup costs at Golden Gate Fields exceed $8.25 million, EBRPD will be obligated to fund the remainder of those costs to meet WCB's restoration requirements.

Long-Term Management

The terms of the grant require that by 2034, EBRPD will complete a planning process and site plan to create, restore, and enhance a minimum of 49.1± acres of wildlife habitat. Construction of wildlife habitat must begin no later than 2037. Forty-nine and one tenth acres represents a portion of the total Property acreage proportionate to WCB's $53,000,000 contribution to the acquisition. Public recreational opportunities currently being discussed for the non-habitat portions of the Property include youth sports fields, urban park amenities, and commercial uses. EBRPD and the City of Albany want to maintain opportunities for commercial recreational development within approximately 30 acres on Fleming Point. Once the habitat area is constructed, the grant agreement and notice of unrecorded grant agreement will be amended to apply to the wildlife habitat area only.

Project Funding

The Department of General Services approved fair market value is $175,000,000. TPL, pursuant to its option agreement with the seller, is directing the seller to deed the Property to EBRPD. The appraisal report was also reviewed by an independent third-party appraiser in accordance with the Appraisal Review and Disclosure Policy. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	$53,000,000
CNRA	$12,000,000
SCC	$60,000,000
San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority	$25,000,000
EBRPD	$20,000,000
TPL	$5,000,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	$175,000,000

WCB's grant agreement requires review and approval of all documents related to real property transactions including, but not limited to, any and all purchase and sale agreements, escrow instructions, closing statements, and Post-Closing Operating Agreement referenced above. Grant funds will not be disbursed into escrow until all documents are final and approved by all parties.

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Adena Ishii, Mayor, City of Berkeley
- Peggy McQuaid, Mayor, City of Albany
- Authur Feinstein, Board President, and Robert Cheasty, Executive Director, Citizens for Eastshore Parks
- Glenn Phillips, Executive Director, Golden Gate Bird Alliance
- Jenny Mulholland-Beahrs, Founding Partner, Inclusion Outdoors
- Najari Smith, Executive Director, Richmond City Rides
- Merrill Pierce, Coordinator, Richmond Outdoors Coalition
- Janet Johnson, coordinator, Richmond Shoreline Alliance
- Edward Sortwell Clement, Jr., Executive Director, Save Mount Diablo
- Joshua Quigley, Sn. Policy Manager, Save the Bay
- Norman La Force, Sierra Club
- Nicolas Maderas

Opposition:

- Brennan Cox, Founder, Friends of the Golden Gate Fields Park
- Katharine Bierce
- Peter Birkholz
- Orion Fulton
- Michael Gold
- Rachel Howard

- Rod Howard
- Peter Maass
- Nick Pilch
- Christopher Sensenig
- Kieron Slaughter

CEQA

The project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.57 as an approval necessary for a site acquisition of a public park funded in whole or in part by the Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024, and Public Resources Code Section 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 restoration of natural conditions, including plant and animal habitats, and preservation of open space or lands for park purposes. The project is also 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.

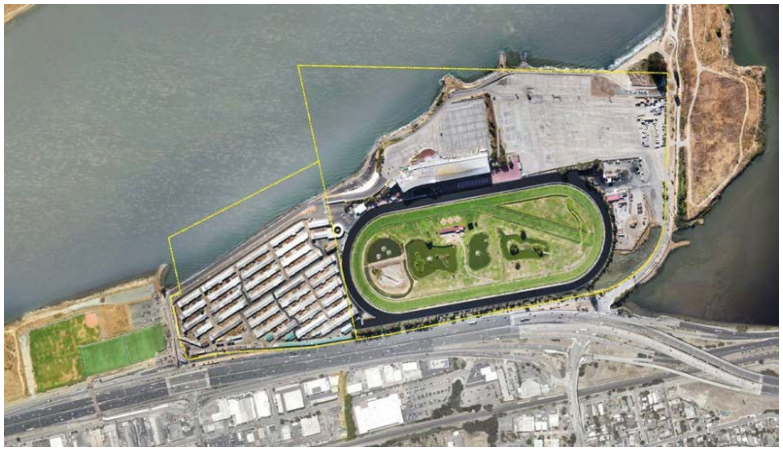
State Government

- Senate: Senator Jesse Arreguín, District 7
- Assembly: Assemblymember Buffy Wicks, District 14

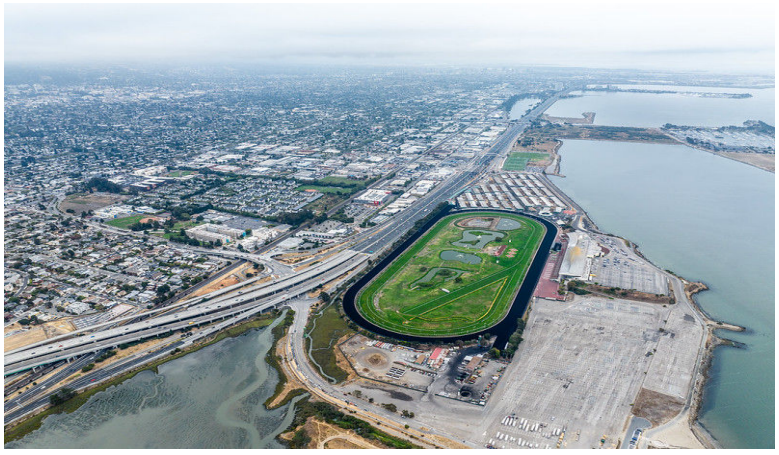
Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the WCB approve this project as proposed, authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project, and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

2026022 Golden Gate Fields



1



2

ADENA ISHII
MAYOR OF BERKELEY

2180 Milvia Street
Berkeley, CA 94704
Tel: (510) 981-7100
TDD: (510) 981-6903
mayor@berkeleyca.gov

10/28/2026

Dr. Jennifer Norris, Executive Director
Wildlife Conservation Board
c/o California Department of Fish and Wildlife
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

Amy Hutzel, Executive Officer
State Coastal Conservancy
1515 Clay Street, 10th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612-1401

RE: Support for the Golden Gate Fields Acquisition Project

Dear Dr. Norris and Ms. Hutzel,

I am writing on behalf of the City of Berkeley to express my strong support for Trust for Public Land's applications to the Wildlife Conservation Board and State Coastal Conservancy for funding to acquire the Golden Gate Fields property located in the cities of Albany and Berkeley, California.

The closure of the Golden Gate Fields horse racing track in June 2024 provides an exceptional opportunity to secure the 162-acre property for conversion into a transformative public park that would create an uninterrupted San Francisco Bay shoreline with restored wetland habitat benefitting native species such as waterfowl and shorebirds, protecting habitat for eight special status species, and expanding recreational opportunities for East Bay residents including adjacent and nearby disadvantaged communities. The acquisition fills a key gap in public park lands, with the potential for significant wetland restoration, enhanced wildlife connectivity, new park-serving amenities, and expanded recreational access from Point Isabel to the Berkeley Pier.

East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) will be the long-term owner and manager of the Golden Gate Fields site if Trust for Public Land successfully acquires the property. EBRPD is the largest regional park system in the United States, operating over 73 parks and managing over 126,000 acres of parklands, open space, and trails across Alameda and Contra Costa counties. Its mission is to preserve natural and cultural resources, provide open space for public recreation and enjoyment, and offer environmental education programs for millions of visitors annually. EBRPD is committed to providing outdoor access and recreational opportunities to diverse populations in the region.

The Golden Gate Fields property is adjacent to and located near parklands already managed by EBRPD, including the 8.5-mile-long McLaughlin Eastshore State Park (MESP), the 23-acre Point Isabel, and Brooks Island, a 373-acre nature preserve directly offshore. In addition, it is near the popular Albany Bulb, two Berkeley parks, and Brickyard Cove (an extension of MESP that is managed by EBRPD). Golden Gate Fields will be a significant addition to this extraordinary network of public lands, with the potential to enrich both ecological and human health and wellbeing.

Golden Gate Fields offers significant potential for environmental stewardship, shoreline protection, and a variety of recreational uses and amenities - but first, it must be protected. I strongly support this effort to acquire Golden Gate Fields and transfer it to EBRPD, so that a robust community engagement process can begin to help envision and shape its future as a regional park and community space. Thank you for considering the Trust for Public Land's funding request.

Sincerely,



Adena Ishii
Mayor

ALBANY CALIFORNIA
1000 San Pablo Avenue, Albany, CA 94706 | albanyca.gov

October 19, 2026

Dr. Jennifer Norris, Executive Director
Wildlife Conservation Board
c/o California Department of Fish and Wildlife
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

Amy Hutzel, Executive Officer
State Coastal Conservancy
1515 Clay Street, 10th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612-1401

RE: Support for the Golden Gate Fields Acquisition Project

Dear Dr. Norris and Ms. Hutzel,

I am writing on behalf of the City of Albany to express my strong support for Trust for Public Land's applications to the Wildlife Conservation Board and the State Coastal Conservancy for funding to acquire the Golden Gate Fields property located in the cities of Albany and Berkeley, California.

The closure of the Golden Gate Fields horse racing track in June 2024 presents an exceptional opportunity to secure this 162-acre property for conversion into a transformative public park. The project would create an uninterrupted San Francisco Bay shoreline, restore wetland habitat benefiting native species such as waterfowl and shorebirds, protect habitat for eight special-status species, and expand recreational opportunities for East Bay residents, including those in adjacent and nearby disadvantaged communities. The acquisition would fill a key gap in public parklands, with significant potential for wetland restoration, enhanced wildlife connectivity, new park amenities, and expanded recreational access from Point Isabel to the Berkeley Pier.

If Trust for Public Land successfully acquires the property, the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) will serve as its long-term owner and manager. EBRPD is the largest regional park system in the United States, operating more than 73 parks and managing

more than 126,000 acres of parklands, open space, and trails across Alameda and Contra Costa counties. Its mission is to preserve natural and cultural resources, provide open space for public recreation and enjoyment, and offer environmental education programs to millions of visitors annually. EBRPD is committed to expanding outdoor access and recreational opportunities for diverse populations throughout the region.

The Golden Gate Fields property is adjacent to and near parklands already managed by EBRPD, including the 8.5-mile McLaughlin Eastshore State Park (MESP), the 23-acre Point Isabel, and Brooks Island, a 373-acre nature preserve directly offshore. The property is also near the popular Albany Bulb, two Berkeley parks, and Brickyard Cove, an extension of MESP managed by EBRPD. Golden Gate Fields would be a significant addition to this extraordinary network of public lands, with the potential to enhance ecological health, promote human well-being, and expand public access to the shoreline.

Golden Gate Fields offers significant potential for environmental stewardship, shoreline protection, and a variety of recreational uses and amenities—but first, it must be protected. I strongly support the acquisition of Golden Gate Fields by Trust for Public Land and its transfer to EBRPD. Immediately following the acquisition, EBRPD must lead a robust community engagement process in close collaboration with the City of Albany and involving members of our diverse community. This process will help envision and shape the property's future as a regional park and community space that is accessible to all and supports the well-being of our community.

Thank you for your consideration of Trust for Public Land's funding applications and for your investment in protecting this important shoreline property for future generations.

Sincerely,

Peggy McQuaid

Peggy McQuaid
Mayor
City of Albany

Citizens for East Shore Parks

Mail: P.O. Box 6087, Albany, CA 94706 Office: 1604 Solano Avenue, Albany, CA 94707
Ph: 510.524.5000 | cespmanager@eastshorepark.org | www.eastshorepark.org

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Emeritus Co-Chair
(1914 - 2002)

Sylvia McLaughlin
Emeritus Co-Chair
Secretary
(1916 - 2016)

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October 28, 2026

Dr. Jennifer Norris, Executive Director
Wildlife Conservation Board
c/o California Department of Fish and Wildlife
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

Amy Hutzel, Executive Officer
State Coastal Conservancy
1515 Clay Street, 10th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612-1401

RE: Support for the Golden Gate Fields Acquisition Project

Dear Dr. Norris and Ms. Hutzel,

Citizens for East Shore Parks is writing to express support for the Trust for Public Land's applications to the Wildlife Conservation Board and State Coastal Conservancy for funding to acquire the Golden Gate Fields property located in the cities of Albany and Berkeley, California.

The closure of the Golden Gate Fields horse racing track in June 2024 provides an exceptional and long anticipated opportunity to secure the 162-acre property for conversion into a transformative public park that would create an almost 9-mile, continuous park along the Eastern shoreline of San Francisco Bay, restoring wetland habitat, benefiting the Pacific Flyway and all the magnificent species that visit and live along our shoreline, including eight special status species.

Converting GGF into a shoreline park also expands park access and recreational opportunities for East Bay residents including our disadvantaged communities. The acquisition fills the centerpiece of a shoreline park and habitat restoration space that will serve as a natural restoration buffer as tides rise, fulfilling state and local goals of using nature and restoration as the go-to design to address sea and water table rise.

Trust for Public Land has worked tirelessly to bring this acquisition to fruition, with its sensible plan to transfer ownership to the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD). EBRPD is the largest regional park system in the United States, managing over 126,000 acres of parklands, open space, and trails across Alameda and Contra Costa counties. Its mission is to preserve natural and cultural resources, provide open space for public recreation and enjoyment, and offer environmental education programs for millions of visitors annually.

The Golden Gate Fields property is adjacent to parklands already managed by EBRPD, specifically the 8.5-mile-long McLaughlin Eastshore State Park (MESP), and is within short range of many parks operated by the EBRPD including Point Molate, the 23-acre Point Isabel, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Shoreline and Brooks Island, a 373-acre nature preserve directly offshore. In addition, it is near the popular Albany Bulb, two Berkeley parks, and Brickyard Cove (an extension of MESP that is managed by EBRPD).

EBRPD operates 73 parks, maintains over 1,300 miles of trails, and is committed to serving diverse populations. Golden Gate Fields will be a significant addition to this extraordinary network of public lands, with the potential to enrich both ecological and human health and wellbeing. Citizens for East Shore Parks strongly supports this acquisition and thanks you for considering the Trust for Public Land's request for funds.

Sincerely,

Arthur Feinstein
Board President
Citizens for East Shore Parks

Robert Cheasty
Executive Director
Citizens for East Shore Parks

October 26, 2026

Dr. Jennifer Norris, Executive Director
Wildlife Conservation Board
c/o California Department of Fish and Wildlife
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

Amy Hutzel, Executive Officer
State Coastal Conservancy
1515 Clay Street, 10th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612-1401

RE: Support for the Golden Gate Fields Acquisition Project

Dear Dr. Norris and Ms. Hutzel,

Golden Gate Bird Alliance is writing to express support for the Trust for Public Land's applications to the Wildlife Conservation Board and State Coastal Conservancy for funding to acquire the Golden Gate Fields property located in the cities of Albany and Berkeley, California.

Golden Gate Bird Alliance is a non-profit organization with 7,000 members and supporters, whose mission is to inspire people to protect Bay Area birds and our shared natural environment. For 110 years we have been a leader in bird conservation and habitat protection across our region and California.

The closure of the Golden Gate Fields horse racing track in June 2024 provides an exceptional opportunity to secure the 162-acre property for conversion into a transformative public park that would create an uninterrupted San Francisco Bay shoreline with restored wetland habitat benefitting native species such as waterfowl and shorebirds, protecting habitat for eight special status species, and expanding recreational opportunities for East Bay residents including adjacent and nearby disadvantaged communities. The acquisition fills a key gap in public park lands, with the potential for significant wetland restoration, enhanced wildlife connectivity, and recreational access and amenities from Point Isabel to the Berkeley Pier.

San Francisco Bay is critical overwintering habitat for many species of shorebirds, most of whom are experiencing significant population declines. The opportunity to put habitat back, creating functioning ecosystems while creating and connecting a shoreline park is a

once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Additionally, the restored shoreline would provide sea level rise resilience, protecting the built environment further inland.

East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) will be the long-term owner and manager of the Golden Gate Fields site if Trust for Public Land successfully acquires the property. EBRPD is the largest regional park system in the United States, managing over 126,000 acres of parklands, open space, and trails across Alameda and Contra Costa counties. Its mission is to preserve natural and cultural resources, provide open space for public recreation and enjoyment, and offer environmental education programs for millions of visitors annually.

The Golden Gate Fields property is adjacent to and located near parklands already managed by EBRPD, including the 8.5-mile-long McLaughlin Eastshore State Park (MESP), the 23-acre Point Isabel, and Brooks Island, a 373-acre nature preserve directly offshore. In addition, it is near the popular Albany Bulb, two Berkeley parks, and Brickyard Cove (an extension of MESP that is managed by EBRPD).

EBRPD operates 73 parks, maintains over 1,300 miles of trails, and is committed to serving diverse populations with recreational opportunities. Golden Gate Fields will be a significant addition to this extraordinary network of public lands, with the potential to enrich both ecological and human health and wellbeing. Golden Gate Bird Alliance strongly supports and thanks you for considering the Trust for Public Land's request for funds.

Sincerely,



Glenn Phillips
Executive Director

GOLDEN GATE BIRD ALLIANCE
2150 Allston Way, Suite 210 Berkeley, California 94704
phone 510.843.2222 *fax* 510.361.0140 *web* www.goldengatebirdalliance.org

inclusion outdoors

October 29, 2026

Dr. Jennifer Norris, Executive Director
Wildlife Conservation Board
c/o California Department of Fish and Wildlife
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

Amy Hutzel, Executive Officer
State Coastal Conservancy
1515 Clay Street, 10th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612-1401

RE: Support for the Golden Gate Fields Acquisition Project

Dear Dr. Norris and Ms. Hutzel,

I am writing on behalf of Inclusion Outdoors to express my strong support for Trust for Public Land's applications to the Wildlife Conservation Board and State Coastal Conservancy for funding to acquire the Golden Gate Fields property located in the cities of Albany and Berkeley, California.

The closure of the Golden Gate Fields horse racing track in June 2024 provides an exceptional opportunity to secure the 162-acre property for conversion into a transformative public park that would create an uninterrupted San Francisco Bay shoreline with restored wetland habitat benefitting native species such as waterfowl and shorebirds, protecting habitat for eight special status species, and expanding recreational opportunities for East Bay residents including adjacent and nearby disadvantaged communities. The acquisition fills a key gap in public park lands, with the potential for significant wetland restoration, enhanced wildlife connectivity, new park-serving amenities, and expanded recreational access from Point Isabel to the Berkeley Pier.

East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) will be the long-term owner and manager of the Golden Gate Fields site if Trust for Public Land successfully acquires the property. EBRPD is

the largest regional park system in the United States, operating over 73 parks and managing over 126,000 acres of parklands, open space, and trails across Alameda and Contra Costa counties. Its mission is to preserve natural and cultural resources, provide open space for public recreation and enjoyment, and offer environmental education programs for millions of visitors annually. EBRPD is committed to providing outdoor access and recreational opportunities to diverse populations in the region.

The Golden Gate Fields property is adjacent to and located near parklands already managed by EBRPD, including the 8.5-mile-long McLaughlin Eastshore State Park (MESP), the 23-acre Point Isabel, and Brooks Island, a 373-acre nature preserve directly offshore. In addition, it is near the popular Albany Bulb, two Berkeley parks, and Brickyard Cove (an extension of MESP that is managed by EBRPD). Golden Gate Fields will be a significant addition to this extraordinary network of public lands, with the potential to enrich both ecological and human health and wellbeing.

Golden Gate Fields offers significant potential for environmental stewardship, shoreline protection, and a variety of recreational uses and amenities - but first, it must be protected. I strongly support this effort to acquire Golden Gate Fields and transfer it to EBRPD, so that a robust community engagement process can begin to help envision and shape its future as a regional park and community space. Thank you for considering Trust for Public Land's funding request.

Sincerely,



Jenny Mulholland-Beahrs
Founding Partner
Inclusion Outdoors

RICH CITY RIDES
Richmond, California

October 12, 2026

Dr. Jennifer Norris, Executive Director
Wildlife Conservation Board
c/o California Department of Fish and Wildlife
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

Amy Hutzel, Executive Officer
State Coastal Conservancy
1515 Clay Street, 10th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612-1401

RE: Support for the Golden Gate Fields Acquisition Project

Dear Dr. Norris and Ms. Hutzel,

On behalf of Rich City Rides, I am writing to express our strong support for Trust for Public Land's applications to the Wildlife Conservation Board and State Coastal Conservancy for funding to acquire the 162-acre Golden Gate Fields property in Albany and Berkeley, California.

Rich City Rides is a Richmond-based nonprofit dedicated to promoting community health, environmental justice, and sustainable transportation through bicycling. We work to make cycling and outdoor recreation accessible to people of all ages and backgrounds, particularly residents of communities historically underserved by investments in parks, trails, and recreational infrastructure.

The closure of the Golden Gate Fields horse racing track in June 2024 presents an extraordinary opportunity to transform this waterfront property into a regional public park. The acquisition would protect a critical stretch of San Francisco Bay shoreline, create opportunities to restore wetlands and habitat for native and special-status species, strengthen wildlife connectivity, and expand public access to nature and recreation.

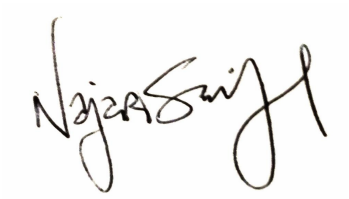
We are especially excited about the potential to connect existing parks and trails from Point Isabel to the Berkeley Pier, improving access to the San Francisco Bay Trail and creating new opportunities for bicycling, walking, and active transportation. For Richmond residents and other nearby communities, these connections could provide much-needed access to safe, welcoming outdoor spaces that support physical activity, mental well-being, and community connection. We believe parks and trails are essential public health infrastructure, and expanding access to them is an important investment in health equity.

We support the proposed transfer of the property to East Bay Regional Park District for long-term stewardship and management. With its extensive experience protecting natural resources and managing public parks and trails, the District is well positioned to guide the property's future. We also encourage a robust community engagement process that includes Richmond residents, youth, bicyclists, and historically underserved communities in shaping a park that balances ecological restoration with accessible recreation and community programming.

Golden Gate Fields represents a rare opportunity to protect an extraordinary stretch of shoreline while creating a lasting public resource for generations to come. Rich City Rides strongly supports this acquisition and urges the Wildlife Conservation Board and State Coastal Conservancy to provide the funding necessary to secure the property for public benefit.

Thank you for considering Trust for Public Land's funding request.

Sincerely,



Najari Smith
Executive Director
Rich City Rides
Richmond, California

RICHMOND OUTDOORS COALITION

October 29, 2026

Dr. Jennifer Norris, Executive Director
Wildlife Conservation Board
c/o California Department of Fish and Wildlife
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

Amy Hutzel, Executive Officer
State Coastal Conservancy
1515 Clay Street, 10th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612-1401

RE: Support for the Golden Gate Fields Acquisition Project

Dear Dr. Norris and Ms. Hutzel,

I am writing on behalf of the Richmond Outdoors Coalition to express my strong support for Trust for Public Land's applications to the Wildlife Conservation Board and State Coastal Conservancy for funding to acquire the Golden Gate Fields property located in the cities of Albany and Berkeley, California.

The closure of the Golden Gate Fields horse racing track in June 2024 provides an exceptional opportunity to secure the 162-acre property for conversion into a transformative public park that would create an uninterrupted San Francisco Bay shoreline with restored wetland habitat benefitting native species such as waterfowl and shorebirds, protecting habitat for eight special status species, and expanding recreational opportunities for East Bay residents including adjacent and nearby disadvantaged communities. The acquisition fills a key gap in public park lands, with the potential for significant wetland restoration, enhanced wildlife connectivity, new park-serving amenities, and expanded recreational access from Point Isabel to the Berkeley Pier.

East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) will be the long-term owner and manager of the Golden Gate Fields site if Trust for Public Land successfully acquires the property. EBRPD is the largest regional park system in the United States, operating over 73 parks and managing over 126,000 acres of parklands, open space, and trails across Alameda and Contra Costa counties. Its mission is to preserve natural and cultural resources, provide open space for public recreation and enjoyment, and offer environmental education programs for millions of visitors annually. EBRPD is committed to providing outdoor access and recreational opportunities to diverse populations in the region.

The Golden Gate Fields property is adjacent to and located near parklands already managed by EBRPD, including the 8.5-mile-long McLaughlin Eastshore State Park (MESP), the 23-acre Point Isabel, and Brooks Island, a 373-acre nature preserve directly offshore. In addition, it is near the popular Albany Bulb, two Berkeley parks, and Brickyard Cove (an extension of MESP that is managed by EBRPD). Golden Gate Fields will be a significant addition to this extraordinary network of public lands, with the potential to enrich both ecological and human health and wellbeing.

Golden Gate Fields offers significant potential for environmental stewardship, shoreline protection, and a variety of recreational uses and amenities - but first, it must be protected. I strongly support this effort to acquire Golden Gate Fields and transfer it to EBRPD, so that a robust community engagement process can begin to help envision and shape its future as a regional park and community space. Thank you for considering Trust for Public Land's funding request.

Sincerely,



Merrill Pierce
Coordinator
Richmond Outdoors Coalition

RICHMOND SHORELINE ALLIANCE

www.richmondshorelinealliance.org

October 26, 2026

Dr. Jennifer Norris, Executive Director
Wildlife Conservation Board
c/o California Department of Fish and Wildlife
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

Amy Hutzel, Executive Officer
State Coastal Conservancy
1515 Clay Street, 10th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612-1401

Re: Support for the Trust for Public Land's Golden Gate Fields Acquisition

Dear Dr. Norris and Ms. Hutzel,

On behalf of Richmond Shoreline Alliance, I am writing to voice our strong support for the Trust for Public Land's applications to the Wildlife Conservation Board and the State Coastal Conservancy. As a Richmond-based grassroots nonprofit that seeks an accessible and healthy shoreline now and for future generations, we have seen firsthand why this land matters. These funds would allow the acquisition of the Golden Gate Fields property, which spans the cities of Albany and Berkeley.

When Golden Gate Fields closed its racetrack in June 2024, it opened a rare opportunity: the chance to protect all 162 acres and turn them into a public park. The project would complete an unbroken stretch of San Francisco Bay shoreline and restore wetlands that support waterfowl, shorebirds, and other native species. It would also safeguard habitat for eight special-status species and bring new recreational opportunities to East Bay residents, including those in neighboring and nearby disadvantaged communities. The site is a missing link in the region's public lands. Acquiring it would make possible meaningful wetland restoration, stronger wildlife corridors, and public access and amenities stretching from Point Isabel to the Berkeley Pier.

If the Trust for Public Land succeeds in acquiring the property, the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) will take on its long-term ownership and management. EBRPD is the largest regional park system in the United States, overseeing more than 126,000 acres of parks, open space, and trails across Alameda and Contra Costa counties. Its mission is to preserve natural and cultural resources, provide open space for public recreation, and offer environmental education to millions of visitors each year.

The district is well positioned to steward this land. Golden Gate Fields sits next to or near several EBRPD-managed sites, including the 8.5-mile McLaughlin Eastshore State Park, the 23-acre Point Isabel, and Brooks Island, a 373-acre nature preserve just offshore. It is also close to the Albany Bulb, two Berkeley parks, and Brickyard Cove, an EBRPD-managed extension of McLaughlin Eastshore State Park.

With 73 parks and more than 1,300 miles of trails, EBRPD has a proven commitment to serving diverse communities. Adding Golden Gate Fields to this network would be a significant gain, benefiting both the ecological health of the shoreline and the health and wellbeing of the people who use it.

Richmond Shoreline Alliance thanks you for considering the Trust for Public Land's funding request, and we urge you to support it.

Sincerely,

Janet Johnson

Janet Johnson
Coordinator

Save Mount Diablo
PRESERVE • DEFEND • RESTORE • EDUCATE • ENJOY

October 22, 2026

Dr. Jennifer Norris, Executive Director
Wildlife Conservation Board
c/o California Department of Fish and Wildlife
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

Amy Hutzel, Executive Officer
State Coastal Conservancy
1515 Clay Street, 10th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612-1401

RE: Support for the Golden Gate Fields Acquisition Project

Dear Dr. Norris and Ms. Hutzel,

On behalf of Save Mount Diablo, I am writing to express support for the Trust for Public Land's applications to the Wildlife Conservation Board and State Coastal Conservancy for funding to acquire the Golden Gate Fields property located in the cities of Albany and Berkeley, California.

The closure of the Golden Gate Fields horse racing track in June 2024 provides an exceptional opportunity to secure the 162-acre property for conversion into a transformative public park that would create an uninterrupted San Francisco Bay shoreline with restored wetland habitat benefitting native species such as waterfowl and shorebirds, protecting habitat for eight special status species, and expanding recreational opportunities for East Bay residents including adjacent and nearby disadvantaged communities. The acquisition fills a key gap in public park lands, with the potential for significant wetland restoration, enhanced wildlife connectivity, and recreational access and amenities from Point Isabel to the Berkeley Pier.

East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD), a greatly valued conservation partner for Save Mount Diablo, will be the long-term owner and manager of the Golden Gate Fields site if Trust for Public Land successfully acquires the property. EBRPD is the largest regional park system in the United States, managing over 126,000 acres of parklands, open space, and trails across Alameda and Contra Costa counties. Its mission is to preserve natural and cultural resources, provide open space for public recreation and enjoyment, and offer environmental education programs for millions of visitors annually. Save

201 N. Civic Drive, Suite 190, Walnut Creek, CA 94596 • T 925-947-3535 • savemountdiablo.org • Tax ID # 94-2681735
ACCREDITED LAND TRUST ACCREDITATION COMMISSION

Mount Diablo and EBRPD have been successfully collaborating on conservation projects since the early 1970s.

The Golden Gate Fields property is adjacent to and located near parklands already managed by EBRPD, including the 8.5-mile-long McLaughlin Eastshore State Park (MESP), the 23-acre Point Isabel, and Brooks Island, a 373-acre nature preserve directly offshore. In addition, it is near the popular Albany Bulb, two Berkeley parks, and Brickyard Cove (an extension of MESP that is managed by EBRPD).

EBRPD operates 73 parks, maintains over 1,300 miles of trails, and is committed to serving diverse populations with recreational opportunities. Golden Gate Fields will be a significant addition to this extraordinary network of public lands, with the potential to enrich both ecological and human health and wellbeing. Save Mount Diablo strongly supports and thanks you for considering the Trust for Public Land's request for funds.

Sincerely,

Edward S. Clement Jr.

Edward Sortwell Clement, Jr.
Executive Director

SAVE THE BAY

October 23, 2026

Dr. Jennifer Norris, Executive Director
Wildlife Conservation Board
c/o California Department of Fish and Wildlife
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

Amy Hutzel, Executive Officer
State Coastal Conservancy
1515 Clay Street, 10th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612-1401

RE: Support for the Golden Gate Fields Acquisition Project

Dear Dr. Norris and Ms. Hutzel,

Save The Bay is the largest regional organization working to protect and restore the San Francisco Bay. Since our founding more than 65 years ago, we have worked to improve public access to the Bay's shoreline and enhance recreational opportunities for everyone to experience and benefit from this incredible area. I'm writing to express our support for the Trust for Public Land's applications to the Wildlife Conservation Board and State Coastal Conservancy for funding to acquire the Golden Gate Fields property located in the cities of Albany and Berkeley, California.

The closure of the Golden Gate Fields horse racing track in June 2024 provided an exceptional opportunity to secure the 162-acre property for conversion into a transformative public park for Bay Area residents including adjacent and nearby disadvantaged communities. The acquisition fills a key gap in public park lands along the East Bay shoreline, with the potential for significant wetland restoration, enhanced wildlife habitat including eight protected species, and recreational access and amenities from Point Isabel to the Berkeley Pier.

East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) will be the long-term owner and manager of the Golden Gate Fields site if Trust for Public Land successfully acquires the property. EBRPD is the largest regional park system in the United States, managing over 126,000 acres of parklands, open space, and trails across Alameda and Contra Costa counties. Its mission is to preserve natural and cultural resources, provide open space for public recreation and enjoyment, and offer environmental education programs for millions of visitors annually.

The Golden Gate Fields property is adjacent to and located near parklands already managed by EBRPD, including the 8.5-mile-long McLaughlin Eastshore State Park (MESP), the 23-acre Point Isabel, and Brooks Island, a 373-acre nature preserve directly offshore. In addition, it is near the popular Albany Bulb, two Berkeley parks, and Brickyard Cove (an extension of MESP that is managed by EBRPD).

Save The Bay has a long history throughout this area, starting from our earliest days working to protect the Bay and increase access to the shoreline. McLaughlin Eastshore State Park was named in honor of one of Save The Bay's founders, Sylvia McLaughlin, in recognition of her and our organization's legacy of working toward a vision of a clean, healthy Bay surrounded by a string of shoreline parks. Trust for Public Land's proposal to acquire the Golden Gate Fields property will help advance this goal, and therefore Save The Bay strongly supports and thanks you for considering the Trust for Public Land's request for funds to acquire this important property.

Sincerely,

J Quigley

Joshua Quigley
Sn. Policy Manager

SIERRA CLUB
BAY ALIVE

909 12th Street, Suite 202
Sacramento, CA 95814

October 24, 2026

Dr. Jennifer Norris, Executive Director
Wildlife Conservation Board
c/o California Department of Fish and Wildlife
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

Amy Hutzel, Executive Officer
State Coastal Conservancy
1515 Clay Street, 10th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612-1401

RE: Support for the Golden Gate Fields Acquisition Project

Dear Dr. Norris and Ms. Hutzel,

The Sierra Club has long advocated for the acquisition of the Golden Gate Fields racetrack site as a park and for restoration as a resilient shoreline wetland to address sea level rise. Its acquisition will be important for improving the health of the San Francisco Bay Estuary and is a key acquisition for the Sierra Club's 30x30 Statewide campaign. We now have a once in a life-time opportunity to save this site as public open space.

Sierra Club is writing to express support for the Trust for Public Land's applications to the Wildlife Conservation Board and State Coastal Conservancy for funding to acquire the Golden Gate Fields property located in the cities of Albany and Berkeley, California.

The closure of the Golden Gate Fields horse racing track in June 2024 provides an exceptional opportunity to secure the 162-acre property for conversion into a transformative public park that would create an uninterrupted San Francisco Bay shoreline with restored

wetland habitat benefitting native species such as waterfowl and shorebirds, protecting habitat for eight special status species, and expanding recreational opportunities for East Bay residents including adjacent and nearby disadvantaged communities. The acquisition fills a key gap in public park lands, with the potential for significant wetland restoration, enhanced wildlife connectivity, and recreational access and amenities from Point Isabel to the Berkeley Pier.

The East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) will be the long-term owner and manager of the Golden Gate Fields site if Trust for Public Land successfully acquires the property. EBRPD is the largest regional park system in the United States, managing over 126,000 acres of parklands, open space, and trails across Alameda and Contra Costa counties. Its mission is to preserve natural and cultural resources, provide open space for public recreation and enjoyment, and offer environmental education programs for millions of visitors annually.

The Golden Gate Fields property is adjacent to and located near parklands already managed by EBRPD, including the 8.5-mile-long McLaughlin Eastshore State Park (MESP), the 23-acre Point Isabel, and Brooks Island, a 373-acre nature preserve directly offshore. In addition, it is near the popular Albany Bulb, two Berkeley parks, and Brickyard Cove (an extension of MESP that is managed by EBRPD). This acquisition would be the realization of Sierra Club's 40+ year campaign to turn this site into a public open space.

The EBRPD operates 73 parks, maintains over 1,300 miles of trails, and is committed to serving diverse populations with recreational opportunities. Golden Gate Fields will be a significant addition to this extraordinary network of public lands, with the potential to enrich both ecological and human health and wellbeing. Sierra Club strongly supports and thanks you for considering the Trust for Public Land's request for funds.

Sincerely yours,

Norman La Force

Norman La Force
Sierra Club California
Bay Alive Committee
Email: n.laforce@comcast.net

Dodds, David@Wildlife

From: Nicholas Maderas <nicholasmaderas@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 4, 2026 1:38 PM
To: Wildlife Conservation Board
Cc: Friends of Five Creeks; Crowfoot, Wade@CNRA; Hutzel, Amy@SCC; Walsh, John@Wildlife; joseph.mavari@wildlife.gov; daniel.vasquez@wildlife.gov
Subject: Nov 19 Meeting Public Comment – Agenda Item 25 – Golden Gate Fields Acquisition

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

You don't often get email from nicholasmaderas@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

WARNING: This message is from an external source. Verify the sender and exercise caution when clicking links or opening attachments.

Hello,

https://photos.app.goo.gl/SgojdYDEkfC5JrXKA

This is a video of three otter pairs "bonding" which establishes the seasonal pond as a breeding habitat area and suggests as much as a 300' development setback.

Thank you for including this video and discussion of otter habitat in your Nov. 19 agenda, and thank you so much for supporting this project and your service protecting the wildlife of California!

Much Appreciated,

Nicholas Maderas

The Muwekma Ohlone Tribal Chairwoman

Muwekma Ohlone Tribe of the San Francisco Bay
2570 N. First Street, 2nd Floor, #1035
San Jose, CA 95131
muwekma@muwekma.org
408-852-1677 o.

Muwekma.org
MuwekmaOhlone.org
MuwekmaFoundation.org

November 10, 2026

Dr. Jennifer Norris, Executive Director
Wildlife Conservation Board
c/o California Department of Fish and Wildlife
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

Amy Hutzel, Executive Officer
State Coastal Conservancy
1515 Clay Street, 10th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612-1401

RE: Support for the Golden Gate Fields Acquisition Project

Dear Dr. Norris and Ms. Hutzel,

On behalf of the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe, I write to express our strong and heartfelt support for Trust for Public Land's applications to the Wildlife Conservation Board and the State Coastal Conservancy for funding to acquire the Golden Gate Fields property in Albany and Berkeley.

For countless generations, the shores and waters of this part of the San Francisco Bay have been home to our people. The closure of the Golden Gate Fields racetrack in June 2024 offers a rare and precious chance to return 162 acres of ancestral shoreline to a future of healing—for the land, for the waters, for the species who share this place with us, and for the communities who live beside it.

We see this acquisition not merely as the creation of another park, but as an opportunity to restore relationship: between people and the Bay, between Indigenous knowledge and contemporary stewardship, and between a landscape long shaped by industry and the living systems it still supports.

The transformation of Golden Gate Fields into a continuous public shoreline, with restored wetland habitat for waterfowl, shorebirds, and eight special-status species, aligns directly with our Tribe's longstanding aspirations for ecosystem wellness. These marshes and mudflats are not empty spaces; they are relatives and providers. Protecting and restoring them strengthens the Bay's ability to sustain life, buffers communities from rising seas, and creates conditions in which native plants, fish, and birds can thrive once more.

At the same time, this project can advance our vision of democratized public spaces. The East Bay's shoreline has too often been closed off to the very communities who live closest to it. A publicly owned and managed park under the East Bay Regional Park District—connected to McLaughlin Eastshore State Park, Point Isabel, Brooks Island, the Albany Bulb, and neighboring Berkeley parks—can become a place where access is not a privilege but a right. We especially welcome the potential for meaningful access for disadvantaged communities and for our own tribal members, many of whom live in the region yet rarely see their history or presence reflected on the land.

Finally, this acquisition offers a powerful opportunity for Ohlone representation. For too long, the story of the East Bay shoreline has been told without the people who have cared for it since time immemorial. We seek not merely acknowledgment, but genuine partnership—so that the park's future is shaped with the knowledge, values, and living culture of the Muwekma Ohlone people.

We strongly support Trust for Public Land's effort to acquire Golden Gate Fields and transfer it to the East Bay Regional Park District. We look forward to a robust community engagement process in which the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe can participate as partners, and we offer the following suggestions for how the park can advance our shared goals through collaboration:

Ecosystem Wellness

- Integrate Muwekma Ohlone Traditional Ecological Knowledge into wetland restoration planning, including guidance on native plant communities, seasonal water dynamics, and the needs of culturally significant species.
- Establish a formal co-stewardship or technical advisory role for the Tribe in habitat design, monitoring of special-status species, and adaptive management of the restored shoreline.
- Explore opportunities for tribal members to participate in on-the-ground restoration, seed collection, planting, and long-term ecological monitoring.

Democratized Public Spaces

- Ensure free, equitable public access while designing gathering areas that can accommodate Indigenous community events, cultural education, and intergenerational activities without requiring special permits or fees.
- Prioritize safe, welcoming access routes and amenities that serve nearby disadvantaged communities and tribal families, including transit connections and culturally appropriate shade, seating, and interpretive spaces.
- Create youth and family programming developed in partnership with the Tribe so that East Bay children—Ohlone and non-Ohlone alike—grow up with a sense of belonging on this shoreline.

Ohlone Representation

- Develop interpretive materials, signage, and educational programs in collaboration with the Tribe that share Muwekma Ohlone history, language (Chochenyo), and ongoing stewardship of the Bay, using dual naming where appropriate and desired by the Tribe.
- Reserve space and support for cultural revitalization activities, such as storytelling, seasonal gatherings, or educational workshops led by tribal members.
- Formalize the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe as a recognized partner in the park's master planning and long-term management so that Ohlone presence is structural, not symbolic.

Thank you for considering Trust for Public Land's funding request and for the opportunity to help shape a shoreline that honors both ecological recovery and the living presence of the Muwekma Ohlone people.

Respectfully,



Charlene Nijmeh
Chairwoman

Chavez, Sabrina@Wildlife

From: Debbie Perkins <debbie.ann.perkins@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 18, 2026 7:59 AM
To: Wildlife Conservation Board
Subject: Public Comment- Golden Gate Fields, Item25/ WCB Meeting, 11/19

You don't often get email from debbie.ann.perkins@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

WARNING: This message is from an external source. Verify the sender and exercise caution when clicking links or opening attachments.

My name is Deborah Perkins-Kalama. I am a resident of Albany California.

I am writing you to encourage you to approve the project that will help us use this once in a life time opportunity to turn the old race track into part of the magnificent Regional Park system that has helped to preserve the shoreline of our spectacular San Francisco Bay.

Without the determination and extraordinary work of the Berkely women who started the move to save our bay in the 60's, and without the continued perseverance of environmental and wildlife groups to continue their work we would not be so fortunate to have this treasure of our bay.

As a fairly new birder, I cannot tell you the joy and peace I receive in walking the shoreline every morning... sharing it with the seasonal burrowing owls, the grebes, seals, great blue heron.

I urge you to support this project.

Thank you,

Deborah Perkins-Kalama
839 Cerrito Street
Albany, CA 94706

[San Pablo councilmember

[November 17,2026]

Damon Nagami
Chair, California Wildlife Conservation Board
715 P Street, 17th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Agenda Item #25: Support for the Golden Gate Fields Acquisition Project in Alameda County

Dear Wildlife Conservation Board Chair and Members:

I write to you in strong support of item #25 on the November 19, 2026 board agenda, which would allocate $53 million in Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) funds toward the acquisition of the Golden Gate Fields property in the cities of Albany and Berkeley for a new shoreline park. This investment represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to restore native habitat, strengthen coastal resilience, and expand public access to the East Bay shoreline.

This year, the State Legislature, in partnership with Governor Newsom, approved a $125 million allocation from Proposition 4 (Prop 4) bond funds toward the acquisition of Golden Gate Fields to convert the property into a waterfront park. This project would create uninterrupted public access to the East Bay shoreline while restoring and protecting California's natural resources.

East Bay Regional Parks District (EBRPD) is intended to serve as the long-term owner and manager of the Golden Gate Fields site. As the oldest and largest regional park system in the country, EBRPD is particularly well suited to steward this land. They currently manage over 126,000 acres of parklands, open space, and trails across Alameda and Contra Costa counties, including open space bordering the Golden Gate Fields property on both ends. EBRPD's mission to preserve natural and cultural resources, provide open space for public recreation and enjoyment, and offer environmental education directly aligns with the vision for this site.

Located along the I-80/580 corridor in Alameda County, the East Bay shoreline provides park access to Bay Area residents and visitors from across California and beyond. As San Pablo CouncilmemberArturoCruz, I know firsthand that new public land at the Golden Gate Fields site will benefit some of our most disadvantaged communities. According to the Prop 4 Disadvantaged Community Mapping Tool, this site is squarely within the most disadvantaged community in Albany and within about a mile and a half of disadvantaged and severely disadvantaged communities in Richmond, El Cerrito, and Berkeley. Additionally, the interstate and Bay Trail, a multi-use path that nearly circumnavigates the San Francisco Bay, directly connects the site to severely disadvantaged communities in Richmond and Oakland. All of these communities, many of whom do not currently have easy access to similar facilities, would directly benefit from a new shoreline park at Golden Gate Fields. Not only will residents have expanded access to open space, but the environmental impact of more vegetation in an area severely burdened by air pollution cannot be overstated.

Unlike many shoreline parks in the East Bay, Golden Gate Fields' long history as a horse racing track means the property was never used as a municipal landfill, reducing the scope of environmental remediation required. Furthermore, the environmental framework includes provisions to address additional investigations, and remediation needs that may arise. The seller has agreed to contribute $8.25 million toward these efforts and the purchase of an environmental liability insurance policy intended to cover previously unknown environmental conditions that may be discovered in the future. EBRPD has the experience and expertise necessary to manage this process, as demonstrated by decades of stewardship of public lands and similar projects throughout the region.

Without this investment, Golden Gate Fields will remain a vast stretch of vacant, underutilized private land along the East Bay shoreline, immediately adjacent to communities that have historically faced environmental and economic disadvantages. Allowing such a significant property to sit idle would only perpetuate existing inequities and deny neighboring communities the benefits of much-needed open space and recreational opportunities. This project presents an opportunity to transform the property into a public asset that serves Berkeley, Albany, and surrounding communities, many of which have advocated for this transformation long before the formal community engagement process begins.

By restoring native wetland habitats and creating much-needed open space, this project has the potential to strengthen shoreline ecosystems, expand public access, and address longstanding community needs. Golden Gate Fields would become a significant addition to the region's extraordinary network of public lands, advancing the long-held vision of an uninterrupted shoreline park along San Francisco Bay and returning this land to the people of California.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Wildlife Conservation Board to approve the $53 million allocation for Golden Gate Fields acquisition.

Sincerely,

[San Pablo councilmember Arturo Cruz

Councilmember Soheila Bana

November 17, 2026

Damon Nagami
Chair, California Wildlife Conservation Board
715 P Street, 17th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Agenda Item #25: Support for the Golden Gate Fields Acquisition Project in Alameda County

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Located along the I-80/580 corridor in Alameda County, the East Bay shoreline provides park access to Bay Area residents and visitors from across California and beyond. As a Councilmember for the City of Richmond, I know firsthand that new public land at the Golden Gate Fields site will benefit some of our most disadvantaged communities.

According to the Prop 4 Disadvantaged Community Mapping Tool, this site is squarely within the most disadvantaged community in Albany and within about a mile and a half of disadvantaged and severely disadvantaged communities in Richmond, El Cerrito, and Berkeley. Additionally, the interstate and Bay Trail, a multi-use path that nearly circumnavigates the San Francisco Bay, directly connects the site to severely disadvantaged communities in Richmond and Oakland.

All of these communities, many of whom do not currently have easy access to similar facilities, would directly benefit from a new shoreline park at Golden Gate Fields. Not only will residents

440 Civic Center Plaza, P.O. BOX 4046, Richmond, CA 94804
Tel: (510) 620-6743
Cell: (510) 779-7280
Fax: (510) 620-6824

have expanded access to open space, but the environmental impact of more vegetation in an area severely burdened by air pollution cannot be overstated.

Unlike many shoreline parks in the East Bay, Golden Gate Fields' long history as a horse racing track means the property was never used as a municipal landfill, reducing the scope of environmental remediation required. Furthermore, the environmental framework includes provisions to address additional investigations and remediation needs that may arise.

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This project presents an opportunity to transform the property into a public asset that serves Berkeley, Albany, and surrounding communities, many of which have advocated for this transformation long before the formal community engagement process begins. By restoring native wetland habitats and creating much-needed open space, this project has the potential to strengthen shoreline ecosystems, expand public access, and address longstanding community needs. Golden Gate Fields would become a significant addition to the region's extraordinary network of public lands, advancing the long-held vision of an uninterrupted shoreline park along San Francisco Bay and returning this land to the people of California.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Wildlife Conservation Board to approve the $53 million allocation for Golden Gate Fields acquisition.

Sincerely,

Councilmember Soheila Bana
District 4

440 Civic Center Plaza, P.O. BOX 4046, Richmond, CA 94804

Tel: (510) 620-6743
Cell: (510) 779-7280
Fax: (510) 620-6824

CITY OF PIEDMONT
CALIFORNIA

November 17, 2027

Mr. Damon Nagami
Chair, California Wildlife Conservation Board
715 P Street, 17th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

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For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Wildlife Conservation Board to approve the $53 million allocation for Golden Gate Fields acquisition.

Sincerely,

Betsy S Andersen

Betsy Smegal Andersen
MAYOR

Signature: Betsy Smegal Andersen (Nov 17, 2026 15:37:30 PST)

Email: bandersen@piedmont.ca.gov

Golden Gate Fields support letter

Final Audit Report 2026-11-17

Created:	2026-11-17
By:	Rosanna Bayon Moore (rbayonmoore@piedmont.ca.gov)
Status:	Signed
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P.O. BOX 942849
SACRAMENTO, CA 94249-0115

California Legislature

November 17, 2026

Damon Nagami
Chair, California Wildlife Conservation Board
715 P Street, 17th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Agenda Item #25: Support for the Golden Gate Fields Acquisition Project in Alameda County

Dear Wildlife Conservation Board Chair and Members:

We write to you in strong support of item #25 on the November 19, 2026 board agenda, which would allocate $53 million in Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) funds toward the acquisition of the Golden Gate Fields property in the cities of Albany and Berkeley for a new shoreline park. This investment represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to restore native habitat, strengthen coastal resilience, and expand public access to the East Bay shoreline.

This year, the Legislature, in partnership with Governor Newsom, approved a $125 million allocation from Proposition 4 (Prop 4) bond funds toward the acquisition of Golden Gate Fields to convert the property into a waterfront park. This project would create uninterrupted public access to the East Bay shoreline while restoring and protecting California's natural resources.

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Located along the I-80/580 corridor in Alameda County, the East Bay shoreline provides park access to Bay Area residents and visitors from across California and beyond. As the legislators representing this part of the East Bay, we know firsthand that new public land at the Golden Gate Fields site will benefit some of our most disadvantaged communities. According to the Prop 4 Disadvantaged Community Mapping Tool, this site is squarely within the most disadvantaged community in Albany and within about a mile and a half of disadvantaged and severely disadvantaged communities in Richmond, El Cerrito, and Berkeley. Additionally, the interstate and Bay Trail, a multi-use path that nearly circumnavigates the San Francisco Bay, directly connects the site to severely disadvantaged communities in Richmond and Oakland. All of these

STATE CAPITOL
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SACRAMENTO, CA 94249-0115

California Legislature

communities, many of whom do not currently have easy access to similar facilities, would directly benefit from a new shoreline park at Golden Gate Fields. Not only will our constituents have expanded access to open space, but the environmental impact of more vegetation in an area severely burdened by air pollution cannot be overstated.

Unlike many shoreline parks in the East Bay, Golden Gate Fields' long history as a horse racing track means the property was never used as a municipal landfill, reducing the scope of environmental remediation required. Furthermore, the environmental framework includes provisions to address additional investigations, and remediation needs that may arise. The seller has agreed to contribute $8.25 million toward these efforts and the purchase of an environmental liability insurance policy intended to cover previously unknown environmental conditions that may be discovered in the future. EBRPD has the experience and expertise necessary to manage this process, as demonstrated by decades of stewardship of public lands and similar projects throughout the region.

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By restoring native wetland habitats and creating much-needed open space, this project has the potential to strengthen shoreline ecosystems, expand public access, and address longstanding community needs. Golden Gate Fields would become a significant addition to the region's extraordinary network of public lands, advancing the long-held vision of an uninterrupted shoreline park along San Francisco Bay and returning this land to the people of California.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the Wildlife Conservation Board to approve the $53 million allocation for Golden Gate Fields acquisition.

Sincerely,

Jesse Arreguín
State Senator, District 7

Buffy Wicks
State Assemblymember, District 14

PINOLE
CALIFORNIA

November 18, 2026

Sent via email

Damon Nagami, Chair
California Wildlife Conservation Board
715 P Street, 17th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Agenda Item #25 – Support for the Golden Gate Fields Acquisition Project in Alameda County

Dear Chair Nagami and Members of the Wildlife Conservation Board:

As Mayor Pro Tem of the City of Pinole, the Contra Costa Mayors' representative on the Board of Directors of the East Bay Economic Development Alliance, a member of the WestCAT Board of Directors, and someone who has lived and served along the I-80 corridor for most of my life, I write in strong support of Item #25 on the Board's November 19, 2026 agenda. This item would allocate $53 million in Wildlife Conservation Board funds toward the acquisition of the Golden Gate Fields property in Albany and Berkeley for a new shoreline park. Opportunities like this do not come twice. I urge you to seize it.

The State has already made its commitment clear. This year, the Legislature and Governor Newsom approved $125 million in Proposition 4 bond funds toward this acquisition. The Board's $53 million is the investment that turns that commitment into a park. Together, these dollars would close one of the most significant remaining gaps in public access along the East Bay shoreline, restore native habitat, and give the Bay Area a resilient, publicly owned waterfront for generations to come.

This park will serve all of West County, not just its host cities. Pinole sits on the same shoreline, a short drive up I-80 from Golden Gate Fields. Our residents, along with families in Richmond, San Pablo, El Cerrito, and Hercules, travel this corridor every day, and the Bay Trail ties our communities together. According to the Prop 4 Disadvantaged Community Mapping Tool, the site lies squarely within the most disadvantaged community in Albany and within about a mile and a half of disadvantaged and severely disadvantaged communities in Richmond, El Cerrito, and Berkeley. The interstate and the Bay Trail connect it directly to severely

disadvantaged neighborhoods in Richmond and Oakland. Many of these families do not have easy access to a park like this today. I have spent my time in office working to bring parks, trails, and public investment to communities that have too often been left out. This project does exactly that, at regional scale.

It is a climate and public health investment. Since 2020, I have made climate action central to my work, including leading Pinole to adopt its first Climate Action and Adaptation Plan and helping secure a $5 million Air District grant for our city. I know how heavily I-80 pollution weighs on the communities that live beside it. Restored wetlands and new vegetation at Golden Gate Fields would help clean the air, buffer the shoreline against rising seas, and give residents in one of the Bay Area's most pollution-burdened corridors a place to breathe. Few acquisitions before this Board will deliver habitat, resilience, and environmental justice benefits all at once.

The right steward is ready. The East Bay Regional Park District, the oldest and largest regional park system in the country, is set to own and manage the site. EBRPD already stewards more than 126,000 acres across Alameda and Contra Costa counties, including the open space bordering Golden Gate Fields on both ends. In West County, we see EBRPD's care every day at places like Point Pinole Regional Shoreline. Its mission to preserve natural and cultural resources, provide open space for recreation, and offer environmental education is exactly what this site needs.

The environmental risks are well managed. Unlike many East Bay shoreline parks, Golden Gate Fields was a horse racing track and never a municipal landfill, which narrows the scope of remediation. The deal's environmental framework provides for further investigation and cleanup as needed. The seller has agreed to contribute $8.25 million toward these efforts and toward an environmental liability insurance policy covering previously unknown conditions. EBRPD has the experience to manage this process, as it has on similar projects throughout the region.

It is an economic development investment for the entire East Bay. I represent the Contra Costa Mayors on the Board of Directors of the East Bay Economic Development Alliance, where mayors, business leaders, and institutions from Alameda and Contra Costa counties work together to strengthen our regional economy. From that seat, I see parks and open space as economic infrastructure, not amenities. A signature shoreline park on the I-80 corridor would draw visitors from across the region and the state, bring customers to local businesses in Albany, Berkeley, and West County, and make the East Bay a more attractive place to live, work, and invest. It would turn a closed racetrack into a public asset that pays dividends for decades, and that is the kind of regional investment this Board and our Alliance both exist to advance.

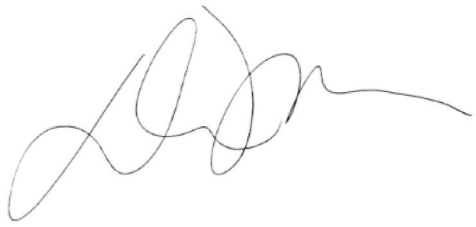
The cost of inaction is real. Without this investment, Golden Gate Fields will remain a vast stretch of vacant, private land beside communities that have long carried more than their share of

environmental and economic burden. Leaving it idle would deepen those inequities. Residents of Albany, Berkeley, and the surrounding communities have advocated for public access to this shoreline for years. They are ready for this park, and so is the region.

Approving Item #25 would restore native wetland habitat, strengthen the shoreline against climate impacts, and advance the long-held vision of an uninterrupted public shoreline along San Francisco Bay. It would return this land to the people of California.

For these reasons, I respectfully and strongly urge the Wildlife Conservation Board to approve the $53 million allocation for the Golden Gate Fields acquisition.

Sincerely,



Devin T. Murphy
Mayor Pro Tempore
City of Pinole

CITY OF PINOLE

2131 Pear Street, Pinole, CA 94564 • Phone: (510) 724-9000
Email: dmurphy@pinole.gov • www.pinole.gov

Igor Tregub
Berkeley City Councilmember
District 4
2180 Milvia Street, 5th Floor
Berkeley, CA 94704
510-981-7140
itregub@berkeleyca.gov

November 18, 2026

Damon Nagami
Chair, California Wildlife Conservation Board
715 P Street, 17th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

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Located along the I-80/580 corridor in Alameda County, the East Bay shoreline provides park access to Bay Area residents and visitors from across California and beyond. As a Berkeley City Councilmember, representing District 4, I know firsthand that new public land at the Golden Gate Fields site will benefit some of our most disadvantaged communities. According to the Prop 4 Disadvantaged Community Mapping Tool, this site is squarely within the most disadvantaged community in Albany and within about a mile and a half of disadvantaged and severely disadvantaged communities in Richmond, El Cerrito, and Berkeley. Additionally, the interstate and Bay Trail, a multi-use path that nearly circumnavigates the San Francisco Bay, directly connects the site to severely disadvantaged communities in Richmond and Oakland. All of these communities, many of whom do not currently have easy access to similar facilities, would directly benefit from a new shoreline park at Golden Gate Fields. Not only will residents have expanded access to open space, but the environmental impact of more vegetation in an area severely burdened by air pollution cannot be overstated.

Unlike many shoreline parks in the East Bay, Golden Gate Fields' long history as a horse racing track means the property was never used as a municipal landfill, reducing the scope of environmental remediation required. Furthermore, the environmental framework includes provisions to address additional investigations, and remediation needs that may arise. The seller has agreed to contribute $8.25 million toward these efforts and the purchase of an environmental liability insurance policy intended to cover previously unknown environmental conditions that may be discovered in the future. EBRPD has the experience and expertise necessary to manage this process, as demonstrated by decades of stewardship of public lands and similar projects throughout the region.

Without this investment, Golden Gate Fields will remain a vast stretch of vacant, underutilized private land along the East Bay shoreline, immediately adjacent to communities that have historically faced environmental and economic disadvantages. Allowing such a significant property to sit idle would only perpetuate existing inequities and deny neighboring communities the benefits of much-needed open space and recreational opportunities. This project presents an opportunity to transform the property into a public asset that serves Berkeley, Albany, and surrounding communities, many of which have advocated for this transformation long before the formal community engagement process begins.

By restoring native wetland habitats and creating much-needed open space, this project has the potential to strengthen shoreline ecosystems, expand public access, and address longstanding community needs. Golden Gate Fields would become a significant addition to the region's extraordinary network of public lands, advancing the long-held vision of an uninterrupted shoreline park along San Francisco Bay and returning this land to the people of California.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Wildlife Conservation Board to approve the $53 million allocation for Golden Gate Fields acquisition.

Sincerely,



Igor Tregub,
Councilmember, City of Berkeley, District 4

Brent Blackaby
Councilmember District 6

11/18/2026

Damon Nagami
Chair, California Wildlife Conservation Board
715 P Street, 17th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Agenda Item #25: Support for the Golden Gate Fields Acquisition Project in Alameda County

Dear Chair and Members of the California Wildlife Conservation Board:

As a member of the Berkeley City Council, I urge you to approve Item #25 on your November 19, 2026 agenda, which would commit $53 million in Wildlife Conservation Board funds toward acquiring the Golden Gate Fields property in Albany and Berkeley for a new shoreline park.

The State has already shown strong support for this project. This year the Legislature and Governor Newsom approved $125 million in Proposition 4 bond funds for the acquisition. The Board's contribution would help complete the purchase and close one of the largest remaining gaps in public access along the East Bay shoreline.

East Bay Regional Park District, the intended long-term owner and manager, is well prepared to care for this land. As the nation's oldest and largest regional park system, the District manages more than 126,000 acres across Alameda and Contra Costa counties, including the open space on both sides of Golden Gate Fields.

This park would serve the communities that need it most. According to the Prop 4 Disadvantaged Community Mapping Tool, the site sits within Albany's most disadvantaged community and about a mile and a half from disadvantaged and severely disadvantaged neighborhoods in Richmond, El Cerrito, and Berkeley. The Bay Trail and I-80 corridor also link it directly to severely disadvantaged communities in Richmond and Oakland. Many of these residents lack easy access to comparable open space, and new vegetation would bring real relief to an area heavily burdened by air pollution.

The site is also a sound investment. Because it was a racetrack rather than a municipal landfill, it needs less environmental cleanup than many East Bay shoreline parks. The seller has agreed to contribute $8.25 million toward further investigation, remediation, and an environmental liability insurance policy covering conditions that may be discovered later.

2180 Milvia Street, Berkeley, CA 94704 ● Tel: (510) 981-7160● TDD: (510) 981-6903 ● Fax: (510) 981-7166
E-Mail: Bblackaby@berkeleyca.gov

Without this funding, Golden Gate Fields will remain vacant private land next to communities that have long faced environmental and economic disadvantages. With it, the State can restore native wetlands, expand public access, and move closer to an unbroken shoreline park along San Francisco Bay.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Board to approve the $53 million allocation for the Golden Gate Fields acquisition.

Sincerely,



Brent Blackaby
Councilmember
Berkeley, California

THE CITY OF
EL CERRITO

Office of the Mayor

November 18, 2026

Damon Nagami
Chair, California Wildlife Conservation Board
715 P Street, 17th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Agenda Item #25: Support for the Golden Gate Fields Acquisition Project in Alameda County

Dear Wildlife Conservation Board Chair and Members:

I write to you in strong support of item #25 on the November 19, 2026 board agenda, which would allocate $53 million in Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) funds toward the acquisition of the Golden Gate Fields property in the cities of Albany and Berkeley for a new shoreline park. This investment represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to restore native habitat, strengthen coastal resilience, and expand public access to the East Bay shoreline.

This year, the State Legislature, in partnership with Governor Newsom, approved a $125 million allocation from Proposition 4 (Prop 4) bond funds toward the acquisition of Golden Gate Fields to convert the property into a waterfront park. This project would create uninterrupted public access to the East Bay shoreline while restoring and protecting California's natural resources.

East Bay Regional Parks District (EBRPD) is intended to serve as the long-term owner and manager of the Golden Gate Fields site. As the oldest and largest regional park system in the country, EBRPD is particularly well suited to steward this land. They currently manage over 126,000 acres of parklands, open space, and trails across Alameda and Contra Costa counties, including open space bordering the Golden Gate Fields property on both ends. EBRPD's mission to preserve natural and cultural resources, provide open space for public recreation and enjoyment, and offer environmental education directly aligns with the vision for this site.

Located along the I-80/580 corridor in Alameda County, the East Bay shoreline provides park access to Bay Area residents and visitors from across California and beyond. As the Mayor of El Cerrito, I know firsthand that new public land at the Golden Gate Fields site will benefit some of our most disadvantaged communities.

According to the Prop 4 Disadvantaged Community Mapping Tool, this site is squarely within the most disadvantaged community in Albany and within about a mile and a half of disadvantaged and severely disadvantaged communities in Richmond, El Cerrito, and Berkeley.

Additionally, the interstate and Bay Trail, a multi-use path that nearly circumnavigates the San Francisco Bay, directly connects the site to severely disadvantaged communities in Richmond and Oakland. All of these communities, many of whom do not currently have easy access to similar facilities, would directly benefit from a new shoreline park at Golden Gate Fields. Not only will residents have expanded access to open space, but the environmental impact of more vegetation in an area severely burdened by air pollution cannot be overstated.

Unlike many shoreline parks in the East Bay, Golden Gate Fields' long history as a horse racing track means the property was never used as a municipal landfill, reducing the scope of environmental remediation required. Furthermore, the environmental framework includes provisions to address additional investigations, and remediation needs that may arise. The seller has agreed to contribute $8.25 million toward these efforts and the purchase of an environmental liability insurance policy intended to cover previously unknown environmental conditions that may be discovered in the future. EBRPD has the experience and expertise necessary to manage this process, as demonstrated by decades of stewardship of public lands and similar projects throughout the region.

Without this investment, Golden Gate Fields will remain a vast stretch of vacant, underutilized private land along the East Bay shoreline, immediately adjacent to communities that have historically faced environmental and economic disadvantages. Allowing such a significant property to sit idle would only perpetuate existing inequities and deny neighboring communities the benefits of much-needed open space and recreational opportunities. This project presents an opportunity to transform the property into a public asset that serves Berkeley, Albany, and surrounding communities, many of which have advocated for this transformation long before the formal community engagement process begins.

By restoring native wetland habitats and creating much-needed open space, this project has the potential to strengthen shoreline ecosystems, expand public access, and address longstanding community needs. Golden Gate Fields would become a significant addition to the region's extraordinary network of public lands, advancing the long-held vision of an uninterrupted shoreline park along San Francisco Bay and returning this land to the people of California.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Wildlife Conservation Board to approve the $53 million allocation for Golden Gate Fields acquisition.

Sincerely,



Gabriel Quinto
Mayor, City of El Cerrito

CC: City Council

SHANELLE SCALES-PRESTON SUPERVISOR, DISTRICT V

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY, BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

November 18, 2026

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Damon Nagami, Chair
California Wildlife Conservation Board
715 P Street, 17th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Agenda Item 25 | Support for the Golden Gate Fields Acquisition

Dear Chair Nagami and Members of the Wildlife Conservation Board:

I write to you in strong support of item #25 on the November 19, 2026 board agenda, which would allocate $53 million in Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) funds toward the acquisition of the Golden Gate Fields property in the cities of Albany and Berkeley for a new shoreline park. This investment represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to restore native habitat, strengthen coastal resilience, and expand public access to the East Bay shoreline.

This year, the State Legislature, in partnership with Governor Newsom, approved a $125 million allocation from Proposition 4 (Prop 4) bond funds toward the acquisition of Golden Gate Fields to convert the property into a waterfront park. This project would create uninterrupted public access to the East Bay shoreline while restoring and protecting California's natural resources.

East Bay Regional Parks District (EBRPD) is intended to serve as the long-term owner and manager of the Golden Gate Fields site. As the oldest and largest regional park system in the country, EBRPD is particularly well suited to steward this land. They currently manage over 126,000 acres of parklands, open space, and trails across Alameda and Contra Costa counties, including open space bordering the Golden Gate Fields property on both ends. EBRPD's mission to preserve natural and cultural resources, provide open space for public recreation and enjoyment, and offer environmental education directly aligns with the vision for this site.

Located along the I-80/580 corridor in Alameda County, the East Bay shoreline provides park access to Bay Area residents and visitors from across California and beyond. As Contra Costa County Supervisor for District 5, I know firsthand that new public land at the Golden Gate Fields site will benefit some of our most disadvantaged communities. According to the Prop 4 Disadvantaged Community Mapping Tool, this site is squarely within the most disadvantaged community in Albany and within about a mile and a half of disadvantaged and severely disadvantaged communities in Richmond, El Cerrito, and Berkeley. Additionally, the interstate and Bay Trail, a multi-use path that nearly circumnavigates the San Francisco Bay, directly connects the site to severely disadvantaged communities in Richmond and Oakland. All of these communities, many of whom do not currently have easy access to similar facilities, would directly benefit from a new shoreline park at Golden Gate Fields. Not only will residents have expanded access to open space, but the environmental impact of more vegetation in an area severely burdened by air pollution cannot be overstated.

Ph: 925-608-4200

Fx: 925-608-4209

190 East 4th Street Pittsburg, CA 94565

bos5@bos.cccounty.us • www.contracosta.ca.gov/supervisor-scales-preston

SHANELLE SCALES-PRESTON SUPERVISOR, DISTRICT V

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY, BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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Vine Hill

Unlike many shoreline parks in the East Bay, Golden Gate Fields' long history as a horse racing track means the property was never used as a municipal landfill, reducing the scope of environmental remediation required. Furthermore, the environmental framework includes provisions to address additional investigations, and remediation needs that may arise. The seller has agreed to contribute $8.25 million toward these efforts and the purchase of an environmental liability insurance policy intended to cover previously unknown environmental conditions that may be discovered in the future. EBRPD has the experience and expertise necessary to manage this process, as demonstrated by decades of stewardship of public lands and similar projects throughout the region.

Without this investment, Golden Gate Fields will remain a vast stretch of vacant, underutilized private land along the East Bay shoreline, immediately adjacent to communities that have historically faced environmental and economic disadvantages. Allowing such a significant property to sit idle would only perpetuate existing inequities and deny neighboring communities the benefits of much-needed open space and recreational opportunities. This project presents an opportunity to transform the property into a public asset that serves Berkeley, Albany, and surrounding communities, many of which have advocated for this transformation long before the formal community engagement process begins.

By restoring native wetland habitats and creating much-needed open space, this project has the potential to strengthen shoreline ecosystems, expand public access, and address longstanding community needs. Golden Gate Fields would become a significant addition to the region's extraordinary network of public lands, advancing the long-held vision of an uninterrupted shoreline park along San Francisco Bay and returning this land to the people of California.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Wildlife Conservation Board to approve the $53 million allocation for Golden Gate Fields acquisition.

Sincerely,

Shanelle Scales-Preston
Supervisor, District 5
Contra Costa County

Ph: 925-608-4200

Fx: 925-608-4209

190 East 4th Street Pittsburg, CA 94565

bos5@bos.cccounty.us • www.contracosta.ca.gov/supervisor-scales-preston

Chavez, Sabrina@Wildlife

From: Cathy Mattison <mattison94104@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 18, 2026 10:43 AM
To: Wildlife Conservation Board
Subject: Public Comment – Golden Gate Fields, Item 25 | WCB Meeting, 11/19

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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You don't often get email from mattison94104@yahoo.com. Learn why this is important

WARNING: This message is from an external source. Verify the sender and exercise caution when clicking links or opening attachments.

- Dear Members of the Wildlife Conservation Board
-
    -
    - Please approve this project—as proposed—and it's funding to acquire the Golden Gate Fields site.
    - There is a need for greater access to open space given all the high-density buildings being built along San Pablo Ave and the BART stations that do not provide any recreational space for thousands of new residents. Funding this project will improve equity through providing access to public parkland and recreational opportunities.
    - The Golden Gate Fields site has great habitat restoration potential and will enhance wildlife connectivity. It is a natural next step to protecting our coastline from unhampered development.
    - Once acquired, Golden Gate Fields can be used to help protect local communities; nature-based climate solutions can be implemented to mitigate the effects of sea level rise.
- We have this generational opportunity to create a transformative public regional shoreline park; we can't let this moment pass us by.
- Thank you for supporting the natural world that we all rely on for mental and physical good health.
- Catherine Mattison
- 415 Cornell Ave. #202
- Albany CA 94706
- mobile: 925-768-3854

CITY OF OAKLAND

Zac Unger
COUNCILMEMBER – DISTRICT ONE
CITY HALL • ONE FRANK OGAWA PLAZA • 2ND FLOOR • OAKLAND, CA 94612
(510) 238-7001 • zunger@oaklandca.gov

November 17, 2026

Damon Nagami
Chair, California Wildlife Conservation Board
715 P Street, 17th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Agenda Item #25: Support for the Golden Gate Fields Acquisition Project in Alameda County

Dear Wildlife Conservation Board Chair and Members:

I write to you in strong support of item #25 on the November 19, 2026 board agenda, which would allocate $53 million in Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) funds toward the acquisition of the Golden Gate Fields property in the cities of Albany and Berkeley for a new shoreline park. This investment represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to restore native habitat, strengthen coastal resilience, and expand public access to the East Bay shoreline.

This year, the State Legislature, in partnership with Governor Newsom, approved a $125 million allocation from Proposition 4 (Prop 4) bond funds toward the acquisition of Golden Gate Fields to convert the property into a waterfront park. This project would create uninterrupted public access to the East Bay shoreline while restoring and protecting California's natural resources.

East Bay Regional Parks District (EBRPD) is intended to serve as the long-term owner and manager of the Golden Gate Fields site. As the oldest and largest regional park system in the country, EBRPD is particularly well suited to steward this land. They currently manage over 126,000 acres of parklands, open space, and trails across Alameda and Contra Costa counties, including open space bordering the Golden Gate Fields property on both ends. EBRPD's mission to preserve natural and cultural resources, provide open space for public recreation and enjoyment, and offer environmental education directly aligns with the vision for this site.

Located along the I-80/580 corridor in Alameda County, the East Bay shoreline provides park access to Bay Area residents and visitors from across California and beyond. As the Councilmember for North Oakland, I know firsthand that new public land at the Golden Gate Fields site will benefit some of our most disadvantaged communities. According to the Prop 4 Disadvantaged Community Mapping Tool, this site is squarely within the most disadvantaged community in Albany and within about a mile and a half of disadvantaged and severely disadvantaged communities in Richmond, El Cerrito, and Berkeley. Additionally, the interstate and Bay Trail, a multi-use path that nearly circumnavigates the San Francisco Bay, directly connects the site to severely disadvantaged communities in Richmond and Oakland. All of these

communities, many of whom do not currently have easy access to similar facilities, would directly benefit from a new shoreline park at Golden Gate Fields. Not only will residents have expanded access to open space, but the environmental impact of more vegetation in an area severely burdened by air pollution cannot be overstated.

Unlike many shoreline parks in the East Bay, Golden Gate Fields' long history as a horse racing track means the property was never used as a municipal landfill, reducing the scope of environmental remediation required. Furthermore, the environmental framework includes provisions to address additional investigations, and remediation needs that may arise. The seller has agreed to contribute $8.25 million toward these efforts and the purchase of an environmental liability insurance policy intended to cover previously unknown environmental conditions that may be discovered in the future. EBRPD has the experience and expertise necessary to manage this process, as demonstrated by decades of stewardship of public lands and similar projects throughout the region.

Without this investment, Golden Gate Fields will remain a vast stretch of vacant, underutilized private land along the East Bay shoreline, immediately adjacent to communities that have historically faced environmental and economic disadvantages. Allowing such a significant property to sit idle would only perpetuate existing inequities and deny neighboring communities the benefits of much-needed open space and recreational opportunities. This project presents an opportunity to transform the property into a public asset that serves Berkeley, Albany, and surrounding communities, many of which have advocated for this transformation long before the formal community engagement process begins.

By restoring native wetland habitats and creating much-needed open space, this project has the potential to strengthen shoreline ecosystems, expand public access, and address longstanding community needs. Golden Gate Fields would become a significant addition to the region's extraordinary network of public lands, advancing the long-held vision of an uninterrupted shoreline park along San Francisco Bay and returning this land to the people of California.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Wildlife Conservation Board to approve the $53 million allocation for Golden Gate Fields acquisition.

Sincerely,



Zac Unger
Oakland City Councilmember, District 1

November 4th, 2026

Wildlife Conservation Board
715 P Street, 17th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Public Comment – Agenda Item 25 – Golden Gate Fields Acquisition – November 19, 2026

Dear Members of the Wildlife Conservation Board,

I strongly support the public acquisition of Golden Gate Fields and the extraordinary opportunity it presents to create a world-class regional waterfront park. As a Berkeley resident and landscape architect who has spent much of my career designing public parks and waterfronts, I believe this property has the potential to become one of the most significant public landscapes in the Bay Area.

However, I am concerned that the terms of the acquisition may unnecessarily limit what this property can become before a comprehensive planning process has even begun. As the Board considers its $53 million contribution toward the $175 million acquisition, I urge you to carefully consider three important issues.

1. Preserve flexibility for future park uses and economic sustainability.

Golden Gate Fields is not simply an opportunity to preserve open space. It is an opportunity to create a dynamic public waterfront that integrates ecological restoration, active recreation, cultural activities, and economic investment.

The acquisition and associated grant restrictions should preserve the ability to consider compatible revenue-generating uses, including hotels, restaurants, retail, recreational facilities, and ground leases that directly support park activities and long-term operations.

These uses should not be predetermined, but neither should they be eliminated before a master planning process has evaluated their potential. Creating a great regional

park will require substantial investment beyond the acquisition itself, and we need to preserve opportunities to generate revenue that can help fund its construction, programming, and ongoing maintenance.

The funding agreements should not become the master plan. They should preserve the flexibility necessary to imagine and implement a park that responds to the environmental, recreational, and economic needs of the region.

2. Require consideration of adaptive reuse before demolition.

I am particularly concerned that the acquisition agreement requires the demolition of existing structures, including the iconic grandstand, before their potential reuse has been meaningfully evaluated.

The grandstand is an extraordinary structure containing substantial embodied carbon. Demolishing it without first examining opportunities for adaptive reuse is fundamentally at odds with the environmental and climate objectives underlying this public investment.

If we are investing public funds intended to advance environmental protection and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, why are we simultaneously committing to the demolition of hundreds of thousands of square feet of existing buildings and infrastructure without first understanding their potential contribution to the future park?

The grandstand and other structures may offer unique opportunities for recreation, community facilities, markets, events, and other uses that could contribute to the park's identity and economic sustainability. We cannot know their potential without first studying them as part of a comprehensive vision for the property.

A master plan should begin with all existing buildings and infrastructure available for consideration, rather than assuming their removal. Once these structures are demolished, those opportunities—and the embodied resources they represent—are lost forever.

I urge the Board to consider whether the acquisition can proceed without making demolition an irreversible prerequisite, allowing the future park planning process to determine which structures should be retained, adapted, or removed.

3. Reconsider whether the acquisition price reflects the property's realistic value.

Finally, I believe we need to seriously question whether the public is getting a fair deal at the proposed $175 million acquisition price.

Golden Gate Fields includes approximately 130 acres of upland, meaning we are paying roughly **$1.35 million per acre**. This is a substantial price for a property whose future uses may be significantly restricted by public ownership, environmental constraints, and the conditions attached to state funding.

The appraisal considers potential commercial development value, yet we need to ask whether those assumptions reflect realistic development opportunities. Are we paying for development potential that may never be realized, or that public acquisition will effectively eliminate?

We also need to ask a fundamental question: **Who are we bidding against?** Is there a credible private buyer prepared to pay this price, with a realistic path to securing the entitlements necessary to support that valuation? Or are we establishing a premium price based on hypothetical development scenarios that may never be feasible?

The recent Point Molate acquisition provides an important comparison. There, the East Bay Regional Park District negotiated a purchase price of approximately $40 million for 81.56 acres, or roughly $490,000 per acre. At Golden Gate Fields, we are paying approximately 2.75 times that amount per upland acre.

While these properties have different characteristics, the comparison should prompt serious scrutiny of the valuation and the assumptions underlying the purchase price.

I urge the Wildlife Conservation Board to examine whether the appraisal adequately accounts for the property's actual development constraints, environmental liabilities, entitlement risks, and the limitations that will govern its future use as a public park.

Public acquisition should not require the public to pay a premium for speculative development value that it will never be able to realize.

Every dollar spent unnecessarily on acquisition is a dollar unavailable for ecological restoration, recreation, public access, and the creation of the park itself.

A once-in-a-generation opportunity deserves thoughtful decisions.

I respectfully ask the Wildlife Conservation Board to ensure that its funding agreements preserve the greatest possible flexibility for future park uses, require meaningful consideration of adaptive reuse before demolition, and carefully scrutinize the acquisition price and underlying appraisal assumptions.

We all want Golden Gate Fields to become a great public park. But creating a truly exceptional park requires more than acquiring land. It requires thoughtful planning,

environmental responsibility, economic sustainability, and the willingness to imagine what is possible.

This should be the moment when we expand the possibilities for Golden Gate Fields, not eliminate them. We need to make good decisions, not simply fast ones.

Sincerely,



Brennan Cox
Landscape Architect
Founder, Friends of Golden Gate Fields Park
Berkeley, California

Copies to:

Wade Crowfoot – Secretary, California Natural Resources Agency
wade.crowfoot@resources.ca.gov

Amy Hutzel – Executive Officer, State Coastal Conservancy
amy.hutzel@scc.ca.gov

John Walsh – Wildlife Conservation Board
Deputy Executive Director, Land Acquisition
John.Walsh@wildlife.ca.gov

Joe Navari, Wildlife Conservation Board - Manager
Joseph.Navari@wildlife.ca.gov

Daniel Vasquez, Wildlife Conservation Board - Manager
Daniel.Vasquez@wildlife.ca.gov

Dodds, David@Wildlife

From: Katharine Bierce <kbierce@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 4, 2026 10:46 AM
To: Wildlife Conservation Board
Subject: Public Comment – Agenda Item 25 – Golden Gate Fields Acquisition

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

You don't often get email from kbierce@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

WARNING: This message is from an external source. Verify the sender and exercise caution when clicking links or opening attachments.

Hi, I have a few comments on Golden Gate Fields.

I am supportive of getting a park. However, I have some reservations about some of the details:

1. **Preserve future opportunities.** The acquisition should allow consideration of restaurants, hotels, retail, recreation, and ground leases that could help fund and sustain a world-class park - particularly because local schools are funded with tax revenue. I know an old Measure C limits things to recreation by the waterfront, but other waterfronts like Berkeley's and Richmond's (a cafe/dog wash + restaurants near those marinas) would add similar value and tax revenue for schools.
   These possibilities shouldn't be eliminated before a master plan is developed.
   We've not heard, nor have we received confirmation, that these uses will be allowed under the current funding requirements.
2. **Consider adaptive reuse before demolition.** The agreement requires demolition of vertical structures, including the grandstand and other buildings, without meaningfully studying their reuse. These structures contain enormous embodied carbon and could become valuable assets for the future park. Once they're gone, they're gone forever.
3. **Question the $175 million purchase price.** We're paying approximately $1.35 million per acre of dry land. Are we paying a premium for speculative development potential that may never be realized? Who are we bidding against? The public deserves confidence that this is a fair price.

Thanks,

Katharine

Dodds, David@Wildlife

From: peter birkholz <pbirkholz@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 4, 2026 10:46 AM
To: Wildlife Conservation Board
Subject: the Future of Golden Gate Fields

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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WARNING: This message is from an external source. Verify the sender and exercise caution when clicking links or opening attachments.

Dear members of the Wildlife Conservation Board.

We all want Golden Gate Fields to become a great public park. But I'm concerned that the terms of this acquisition are limiting its future before the planning has started. Please consider the following:

Preserve future opportunities. The acquisition should allow consideration of restaurants, hotels, retail, recreation, and ground leases that could help fund and sustain a world-class park. These possibilities shouldn't be eliminated before a master plan is developed. We've not heard, nor have we received confirmation, that these uses will be allowed under the current funding requirements.

Consider adaptive reuse before demolition. The agreement requires demolition of vertical structures, including the grandstand and other buildings, without meaningfully studying their reuse. These structures contain enormous embodied carbon and could become valuable assets for the future park. Once they're gone, they're gone forever.

Question the $175 million purchase price. We're paying approximately $1.35 million per acre of dry land. Are we paying a premium for speculative development potential that may never be realized? Who are we bidding against? The public deserves confidence that this is a fair price.

peter

peter
510-207-8061

Dodds, David@Wildlife

From: Orion Fulton <orionfulton@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 4, 2026 2:17 PM
To: Wildlife Conservation Board
Subject: Public Comment – Agenda Item 25 – Golden Gate Fields Acquisition

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

You don't often get email from orionfulton@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

WARNING: This message is from an external source. Verify the sender and exercise caution when clicking links or opening attachments.

Honorable Board Members,

I am writing to express concern over the Golden Gate Field (GGF) acquisition process. As a West Berkeley resident who uses the shoreline all the time, I am strongly in favor of turning GGF into a regional park. However, I am concerned with the following and ask the Wildlife Conservation Board ("Board") to carefully examine these points when making its decision to grant $53 million to Trust for Public Land and East Bay Regional Parks District to purchase the property.

1. **Question the $175 million purchase price.** We're paying approximately $1.35 million per acre of dry land. Are we paying a premium for speculative development potential that may never be realized? I urge the Board to examine whether the appraisal adequately accounts for the property's actual development constraints, environmental liabilities, entitlement risks, and the limitations that will govern its future use as a public park. It is not enough to say Measure C creates land value, as the appraisal assumes, when the goal is habitat restoration and related recreation.
2. **Consider adaptive reuse before demolition.** The agreement requires demolition of vertical structures, including the grandstand and other buildings, without meaningfully studying their reuse. These structures contain enormous embodied carbon and could become valuable assets for the future park. Once they're gone, they're gone forever. $20 million demolition is not worth it.
3. **Preserve future opportunities.** The acquisition should allow consideration of restaurants, hotels, retail, recreation, and ground leases that could help fund and sustain a world-class park. These possibilities shouldn't be eliminated before a master plan is developed which could include adaptive reuse. We've not heard, nor have we received confirmation, that these uses will be allowed under the current funding requirements.

Thanks in large part to your decision to use Prop 4 money for this acquisition, we have the opportunity to have a much better waterfront than we have today. But without leadership, my fear is that the public ends up overpaying and getting an underwhelming park experience. Please fund the acquisition but only after asking hard questions and getting assurances we can keep all our opportunities on the table.

Sincerely,

Orion Fulton
2111 9th Street, Berkeley CA

Dodds, David@Wildlife

From: Michael Gold <contactmgold@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 4, 2026 6:08 PM
To: Wildlife Conservation Board
Subject: Public comment - Agenda item 25, Golden Gate Fields Acquisition

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

You don't often get email from contactmgold@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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Please do not allocate any funds whatsoever toward the GGF acquisition at this time. And please do not do so in the future unless and until a rational plan arises to actually defend, protect, and improve wildlife habitat on the site.

There is no such plan today. Apparently the various agencies and nonprofits considering funding are looking at a plan to acquire the land and demolish above-ground structures. This alone does not deliver a park. An enormous concrete and asphalt slab will remain. And, considering the cost of the budget item currently under consideration, the funding you are considering does not deliver enough benefits to wildlife in Albany and Berkeley. Birds, deer, monarch butterflies, and many other species could benefit enormously from far smaller targeted investments into habitat improvement and educating property owners and agencies in Albany and Berkeley. Feel free to contact me about the matter.

The seller of the property has reportedly forbidden soil testing ahead of the land sale. The property was in the vicinity of, or directly corresponds to, a former dynamite plant that emitted an abundance of toxic materials. We cannot characterize tthose materials under the current purchase agreement.

That's called buying a "pig in a poke".--a gamble, not an investment in wildlife. Another site nearby (Richmond Field Station) continues to have access restrictions that are in part shaped by the soil contamination attrributable to historic manufacture of explosives there.

The measures that may be needed to remediate and protect against groundwater intrusion and seepage into the Bay are unknown. The budget under consideration does not account for those measures - a bad investment.

As for benefits to wildlife, assuming a project does begin as currently scheduled, I urge you to first obtain firm commitments from the involved partner agencies and nonprofits to prioitize wildlife. Demand specific measures, and ignore vague language.Part of your job is to be voices for the voiceless. Don't be a rubber stamp. The EBPRD process will consider wildlife as only one element in a much larger list of priorities. if you have seen EBPRD's process play out in the past, you know well that wildlife is not going to be as high on the list as the other priorities.

Yours truly,

Michael Gold
Albany, California

Dodds, David@Wildlife

From: Rachel Howard <rachelhoward713@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 5, 2026 12:50 AM
To: Wildlife Conservation Board
Subject: Golden Gate Fields Purchase

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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WARNING: This message is from an external source. Verify the sender and exercise caution when clicking links or opening attachments.

Hello Wildlife staff and board of directors:

This acquisition should allow consideration of restaurants, hotels, retail, recreation, and ground leases that could help fund and sustain a world-class park. These possibilities shouldn't be eliminated before a master plan is developed. We've not heard, nor have we received confirmation, that these uses will be allowed under the current funding.

The agreement requires demolition of vertical structures, including the grandstand and other buildings, without meaningfully studying their reuse. These structures contain enormous embodied carbon and could become valuable assets for the future park. Once they're gone, they're gone

Based on the current price being considered-- $175 million. We're paying approximately $1.35 million per acre of dry land. Are we paying a premium for speculative development potential that may never be realized? Who are we bidding against? The public deserves confidence that this is a fair price. The recent Point Molate acquisition provides an important comparison. There, the EastBay Regional Park District negotiated a purchase price of approximately $40 million for 81.56acres, or roughly $490,000 per acre. At Golden Gate Fields, we are paying approximately2.75 times that amount per upland acre. Why?

Please take my tax dollars this year and long term for many years seriously and carefully as a sacred trust. We can save on this purchase in the beginning, And we can generate revenue long term and still keep special for the public, With less burden on the pocketbook of citizens.

Sincerely

Rachel Howard

Born&raised in Berkeley

Dodds, David@Wildlife

From: Rod Howard <rodney.c.howard@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 4, 2026 11:01 AM
To: Wildlife Conservation Board
Subject: Golden Gate Fields purchase

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

You don't often get email from rodney.c.howard@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

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1. Wildlife staff and board of directors:

This acquisition should allow consideration of restaurants, hotels, retail, recreation, and ground leases that could help fund and sustain a world-class park. These possibilities shouldn't be eliminated before a master plan is developed. We've not heard, nor have we received confirmation, that these uses will be allowed under the current funding.

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Please take my tax dollars this year and long term for many years seriously and carefully as a sacred trust. We can save on this purchase in the beginning, And we can generate revenue long term and still keep special for the public, With less burden on the pocketbook of citizens.

Sincerely

Rod Howard

Resident of Berkeley 35 years

Dodds, David@Wildlife

From: Peter Maass <pcmaass@pacbell.net>
Sent: Wednesday, November 4, 2026 12:50 PM
To: Wildlife Conservation Board
Subject: Public Comment, Agenda Item 25 Golden Gate Fields Acquisition

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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Dear Board Members,

I'm writing in regards to the proposed $53 million dollar contribution by the California Wildlife Conservation Board to the acquisition of Golden Gate Fields for the purpose of turning this property into a park, to be administrated by the East Bay Regional Park District. I fully support the effort of GGF becoming a park, but I am wary of any restrictions that might make this space less than the potential iconic world-class park it can be. Given its location, accessibility, and size, GGF planning should include not only restoration of coastal marshes and shorelines, and expansion of recreation playing fields, but also amenities that can truly make this park iconic. Planning will need to be able to consider the creative reuse of existing structures before they are all demolished. Consideration should also be possible for some new structures that might include a restaurant or museum, community centers, or something completely different that would enhance views and natural beauty of the location. Something that contributes financially to the development and maintenance of the park should also be on the table, the current income from the Verizon site ($25,000 per month) will fill only a fraction of the needed future revenue. I realize that the acquisition of GGF needs to happen before any meaningful planning can begin, but please do not make the acquisition restrict the planning and end possibility of this space becoming the world class iconic park it has the potential to be.

Thanks for your Consideration,

Peter Maass
Former Mayor and Albany Resident

Dodds, David@Wildlife

From: Nick Pilch <npilch@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 4, 2026 11:24 AM
To: Wildlife Conservation Board
Subject: Public Comment – Agenda Item 25 – Golden Gate Fields Acquisition

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Chair and Members of the Board,

I am writing in support of the acquisition of Golden Gate Fields, but with concerns for the process.

It has been pre-negotiated, *outside of the public eye, by a private institution*, that all structures will be removed as a term of acquisition. Why? Why not ask for money for this demolition so that we can decide ourselves about how the demolition will go and whether or not we want adaptive reuse of any structures. These structures contain enormous embodied carbon and could become valuable assets for the future park. Once they're gone, they're gone forever.

Further, I am concerned with the fact that the discussion about the loss of revenue to the City of Albany is almost non-existent. The possibility of deeding some of the land to the City of Albany should be considered for the purpose of possibly making up for the revenue loss.

Please see my more detailed remarks which I hope to have published soon.

Nick Pilch, former Albany Mayor

--
Nick Pilch
npilch@gmail.com

Dodds, David@Wildlife

From: Christopher Sensenig <sensenig77@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 4, 2026 11:46 AM
To: Wildlife Conservation Board
Subject: Public Comment – Agenda Item 25 – Golden Gate Fields Acquisition

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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Hello,

I would like to speak as a soccer parent in the North Oakland/Emeryville/Berkeley/Albany/El Cerrito region. The soccer community is desperately short on field space, teams are often practicing 4 teams to a field and home games and practices are scheduled as far as San Pablo and North Richmond for Berkeley/Albany based teams. Please do not create any restrictions on new field space, particularly turf fields with lighting. I would also ask that you support temporary sports field uses to occur on the existing parking lot or on the stable demolition site while the major planning and development happens for the larger area. I am an urban designer and planner and know how long the overall process will take. In the meantime, the community can use these spaces. While the parking lot may not be the ultimate best locations for sports field, for the next 10-15 years it can be an active place and serve a great need for our community.

I also support not demolishing the grandstand until a study is completed on its possible reuse.

The committee should also keep open the possibility for consideration of restaurants, hotels, retail, recreation, and ground leases that could help fund and sustain a world-class park.

Thank you,
Chris Sensenig
Berkeley, CA

November 4th, 2026

Wildlife Conservation Board
715 P Street, 17th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Public Comment – Agenda Item 25 – Golden Gate Fields Acquisition – November 19, 2026

Dear Members of the Wildlife Conservation Board,

Re: Golden Gate Fields – An Opportunity to Create a Premier Regional Waterfront Destination

As a Berkeley native, longtime East Bay resident, and parent of two student-athletes, I strongly support the public acquisition of Golden Gate Fields. My family regularly enjoys this stretch of the waterfront, whether biking or walking through the Albany Bulb and César Chávez Park. It is one of the most beautiful and accessible recreational areas in the Bay Area, with extraordinary views of the San Francisco Bay. I believe Golden Gate Fields has the potential to become the premier waterfront destination on the Bay.

However, we need to keep an open mind about what this property can become and avoid making decisions today that limit its potential for generations to come.

My children have benefited from the recreational opportunities throughout our community. One uses Tom Bates Regional Sports Complex for rugby, while the other has competed in beach volleyball. Through our travels for club volleyball, we have visited communities throughout California and beyond that have transformed waterfronts and underutilized properties into vibrant sports and recreation destinations. These places demonstrate that public open space can be much more than passive recreation. It can bring people together, attract visitors, support local businesses, and generate meaningful economic activity.

Golden Gate Fields has that same potential. I encourage the Wildlife Conservation Board to consider three important principles as it evaluates its $53 million contribution toward the $175 million acquisition:

1. Preserve flexibility for an active, economically sustainable waterfront.

We should not limit the vision for Golden Gate Fields to open space and passive recreation. There is an opportunity to create a world-class regional destination that combines environmental restoration with organized sports, beach recreation, cultural programming, events, restaurants, retail, and other compatible amenities. These activities can attract visitors, support surrounding businesses, create jobs, and generate revenue to help fund the park's long-term operations and

maintenance. We should allow a comprehensive master planning process to evaluate these possibilities before eliminating them through funding restrictions.

2. Evaluate adaptive reuse before committing to demolition.

I am particularly concerned about requiring the demolition of existing structures, including the iconic grandstand, before their potential reuse has been fully evaluated. These facilities could offer opportunities for community activities, sports programming, events, and other amenities that contribute to the property's identity and economic sustainability. We should take an environmentally responsible approach and study what can be reused before committing to demolishing valuable existing infrastructure.

3. Ensure the public is getting a fair deal.

The proposed $175 million acquisition deserves careful scrutiny. We should understand whether the appraisal reflects realistic development potential, environmental constraints, entitlement risks, and the restrictions that may accompany public ownership. Every dollar spent acquiring the property is a dollar that cannot be invested in restoration, recreation, programming, and public amenities. We owe taxpayers a thoughtful evaluation of the property's value.

Golden Gate Fields is a once-in-a-generation opportunity. I envision a place where families gather, young people compete, athletes train, visitors enjoy the waterfront, and local businesses benefit from increased activity—all against one of the most spectacular backdrops in the Bay Area.

We should aspire to create something that is both environmentally responsible and economically sustainable. Let's not define the future of Golden Gate Fields before we have fully explored what is possible. Public ownership should expand our options, not unnecessarily restrict them. I urge the Wildlife Conservation Board to preserve flexibility, encourage innovation, and allow a comprehensive planning process to shape what could become the Bay Area's premier regional waterfront destination.

Sincerely,
Kieron Slaughter

Copies to:
Wade Crowfoot — Secretary, California Natural Resources Agency
wade.crowfoot@resources.ca.gov

Amy Hutzel — Executive Officer, State Coastal Conservancy
amy.hutzel@scc.ca.gov

John Walsh – Wildlife Conservation Board
Deputy Executive Director, Land Acquisition

John.Walsh@wildlife.ca.gov

Joe Navari, Wildlife Conservation Board - Manager
Joseph.Navari@wildlife.ca.gov

Daniel Vasquez, Wildlife Conservation Board - Manager
Daniel.Vasquez@wildlife.ca.gov

ENDANGERED HABITATS LEAGUE

DEDICATED TO ECOSYTEM PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABLE LAND USE

November 11, 2026

Damon Nagami, Chair
Wildlife Conservation Board
715 P Street, 17th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Item 25, Golden Gate Fields and other political "earmarks"

Dear Chair Nagami and Board Members:

Endangered Habitats League (EHL) writes in serious concern over the way massive legislative earmarks are undermining and compromising your Board's mission. For your reference, EHL is a Southern California conservation group dedicated to ecosystem protection and sustainable land use. Since 1991, we have sought ecosystem reserves in our region, in partnership with WCB and other agencies.

Proposition 4 is a multipurpose "climate" bond with a significant wildlife component, the latter including monies dedicated to state-chartered conservancies and to WCB for merit-based grants. Because some parts of the state have conservancies and some don't, the funding available to your Board for competitive grants is all the more important to address inequities and overall biodiversity needs.

As you know, the job the WCB does to serve all regions and diverse needs is outstanding. Yet, of the $310 million in this year's budget (SB 113) for WCB, approximately *2 of every three dollars* were earmarked by the Legislature and Governor and *removed* from the competitive grant process. This means that *2 of every 3* biodiversity dollars will *circumvent* the WCB General Grant Guidelines, and, effectively, not be assessed against your Strategic Plan (adopted to "guide the Board's conservation and public access investments"), equity goals, 30X30, or anything else. These projects also bypass matching policies.

As a result, cornerstone programs, like Natural Community Conservation Planning (NNCP), will compete for a rapidly *shrinking* pot of money. This is despite NCCP being the Department's premier effort to protect endangered species, and despite that fact state funds are urgently needed to maintain expedited permitting for infrastructure and development. Indeed, with the wholesale use of legislative "pork" by applicants, those playing by the rules or without political connections are, frankly, playing a fool's game. As this year's earmark percentage more than doubles last year's 25%,[1] next year, there could be *no* un-earmarked dollars!

[1] "California lawmakers found money for these pet projects even as they slashed the budget," *CalMatters*, Nov. 2025 <https://calmatters.org/politics/2025/11/california-budget-earmarks-2025/>

While some legislative earmarks may be meritorious, other may not. Even if meritorious, timing and priority are imposed upon your Board. *Why were project proponents not content to compete on the merits?* In this *unaccountable and opaque system*, we will never know if these were the best uses of the tax dollars the voters entrusted to the state. That is simply wrong, and if the voters had been warned of the pork-barrel, Proposition 4 would not have passed.

In the example of Golden Gate Fields, the recipient of $125 million in total Proposition 4 earmarks, East Bay Parks describes its goal for this now-degraded land as a "landmark waterfront park and shoreline habitat" with "new recreational opportunities and supporting amenities." While the agenda item recommends tying the $53 million award to 49 acres of future wetlands (the rest of the site being ball fields, other active recreation, and commercial uses) you should scrutinize whether more than $1 million per acre – not including restoration – is a cost-effective way to restore the Bay. This is consequential, as WCB's Proposition 4 funds are being rapidly depleted, and it is not your Board that is controlling the money. East Bay Parks should be asked where the Climate Bond defines "outdoor recreation" as commercial ball fields.

Endangered Habitats League asks your Board to protest strongly and in writing to the new Legislature and new Governor against the misuse of Proposition 4. Please also explore your legal options regarding earmark implementation. California's wildlife demands this, lest accountability and public trust deteriorate even further.

Yours truly,



Dan Silver
Executive Director

Chavez, Sabrina@Wildlife

From: Norris, Jennifer@Wildlife
Sent: Friday, November 13, 2026 9:51 AM
To: Chavez, Sabrina@Wildlife
Subject: FW: Comment on Golden Gate Fields Agenda Item

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

From: Frazier Haney <frazier.h@wildlandsconservancy.org>
Sent: Thursday, November 12, 2026 8:08 PM
To: Norris, Jennifer@Wildlife <Jennifer.Norris@Wildlife.ca.gov>
Subject: Comment on Golden Gate Fields Agenda Item

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Dr. Norris and Wildlife Conservation Board Members,

For more than 30 years, The Wildlands Conservancy has worked to protect and restore California's natural landscapes, becoming one of the state's largest nonprofit nature preserve owners. We have long appreciated WCB's commitment to rigorous, science-based evaluation of conservation investments and the careful stewardship of public funds. These standards are fundamental to the credibility and effectiveness of California's conservation programs.

It is in that spirit that we write to express our concern regarding the proposed $53 million WCB grant for the acquisition of Golden Gate Fields.

We recognize the potential public benefits of this acquisition. However, WCB's own staff report raises serious questions about whether the transaction meets the standards of due diligence and financial protection ordinarily required of projects receiving state conservation funding, and we are also concerned with this project's conservation and public benefit relative to other potential investments.

As staff acknowledge, subsurface environmental investigations have not been performed despite known contamination, and the site has a history of serving as a landfill. Cleanup costs are estimated at $6–15 million, yet the $8.25 million provided by the seller must also cover further investigations and environmental insurance, which excludes known contaminants. More importantly, the transaction lacks the regulator-approved remediation plan and financial guarantees that WCB ordinarily requires to protect the state's investment.

These are not procedural technicalities. As staff explain, such safeguards exist to ensure that unforeseen cleanup obligations do not compromise the conservation outcomes the state is paying to achieve.

Our larger concern is that a legislatively directed funding commitment may effectively place the Board in the position of approving a transaction that would not otherwise satisfy its customary due diligence

and competitive grant program standards. Legislative direction should not substitute for the Board's independent judgment or diminish the protections applied to other conservation investments.

In this same regard, how does this project advance the widely supported objectives of the WCB's strategic plan, the state's 30 X 30 goals, or the biodiversity and climate objectives of Proposition 4, especially in comparison with other competitively vetted land acquisition projects? We hope that the Board can discuss these items to fully consider how an investment of this magnitude advances these well-established and ambitious goals for statewide conservation efforts relative to other investments around the state.

We urge the Board to defer approval until the environmental risks have been adequately characterized and appropriate financial safeguards are secured, and to fully consider how this extraordinary expenditure advances the conservation objectives enshrined in state policy and voter-approved funding measures. Maintaining these standards is essential to protecting public funds, delivering meaningful conservation outcomes, and preserving public confidence in WCB's stewardship of voter-approved public funds.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our concerns.

Respectfully,

Frazier Haney

THE WILDLANDS CONSERVANCY

FRAZIER HANEY
Executive Director

EXECUTIVE HEADQUARTERS
39611 Oak Glen Road, Building 12
Oak Glen, CA 92399
(909) 797-8507 office

OUR DUAL MISSION
To preserve the beauty and biodiversity of the earth and to provide programs so that children may know the wonder and joy of nature.

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Wildlife Conservation Board
715 P Street 17th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Concerns Regarding the Use of Proposition 4 Wildlife Conservation Board Funds for the Acquisition of Golden Gate Fields

Dear Wildlife Conservation Board,

East Bay YIMBY is a grassroots advocacy organization devoted to ending the housing crisis in the San Francisco East Bay, as well as across the wider region. We are a chapter of YIMBY Action, and we represent the portion of the San Francisco Bay Area that includes Albany and Berkeley.

We are writing to express concerns about the decision to direct $53 million in Proposition 4 funds allocated to the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) toward the acquisition of the former Golden Gate Fields racetrack in Albany and Berkeley. We question whether committing $175 million in public funds to this purchase is appropriate given the property's existing condition, environmental uncertainties, and the significant costs that will be required to restore it. We believe that housing could be a better use of some of this land and ask that the WCB not make a decision that forecloses this option. We believe Golden Gate Fields presents a unique opportunity for housing that should be considered before committing to strictly open-space uses.

The parcel itself already has substantial development on it. To restore it to open space would require significant mitigation, some of which could be averted for more developed uses such as housing. While we are a pro-housing organization rather than a conservation organization and don't pretend to be expert in which lands to prioritize for habitat protection and restoration, the condition of the parcel begs the question of whether other land with more intact habitat might represent a more appropriate use of conservation funding.

For these reasons, we request a more transparent, inclusive process for determining the future of this site, and we urge you to include housing on higher-ground portions of the site as an option.

Sincerely,

Sarah Bell
Chapter lead, East Bay YIMBY

26. La Grange Salmon Habitat Restoration Project, Phase 2b **Restoration Implementation**

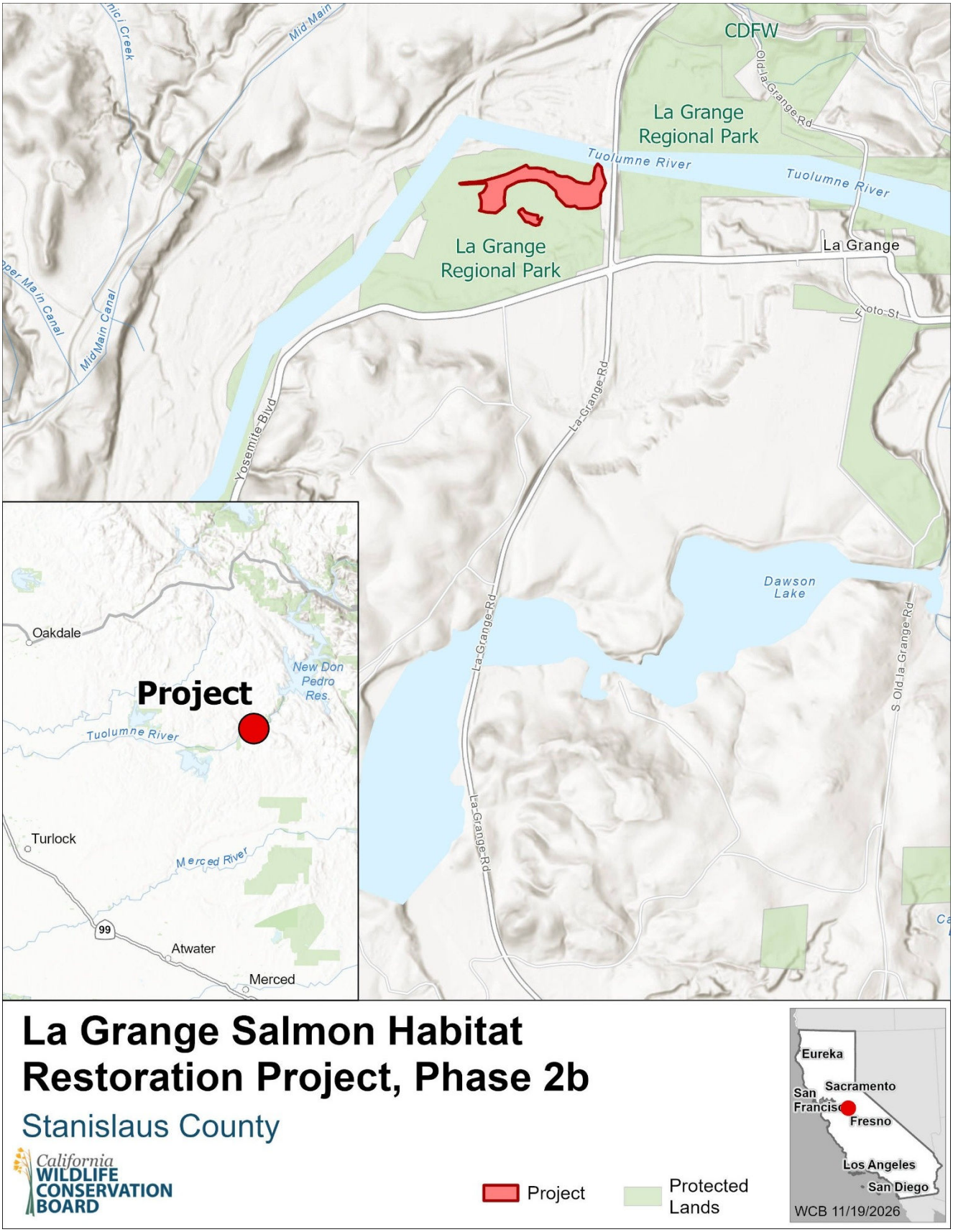
WCB Grant: $3,391,000
Fund Source(s): Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Fund of 2014 (Proposition 1 – Enhanced stream flows), Water Code Section 79733.
Grantee: Yosemite Rivers Alliance
Landowner: Stanislaus County Parks and Recreation
Location: 0.5 miles northwest of La Grange
County: Stanislaus

Project Highlights

- Restore 20 acres of floodplain, riparian, and side channel habitat
- Increase habitat value and channel complexity
- Create spawning and rearing habitat for migratory salmonids
- Support populations of fall-run Chinook salmon, spring-run Chinook salmon, and steelhead
- Complete implementation of Phase 2, which began with the Phase 2a project funded by WCB

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: Yes. Project is located within an SDAC. This project will support salmonid populations and increase recreational opportunities for surrounding communities. It will also reduce flood risks and pollution exposure for downstream communities along the lower Tuolumne River corridor.
- Tribal Partnerships: Yes. The Northern Valley Yokuts and Chicken Ranch Rancheria of Me-Wuk both are providing cultural monitoring for the Phase 2a portion and are anticipated to continue to do so for phase 2b.
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B2.2


CDFW
La Grange Regional Park
Tuolumne River
Tuolumne River
La Grange Regional Park
La Grange
Old La Grange Rd
Yosemite Blvd
La Grange Rd
Dawson Lake
S Old La Grange Rd
Mid Main
Mid Main Canal
Project
Oakdale
New Don Pedro Res.
Tuolumne River
Turlock
Merced River
99
Atwater
Merced
La Grange Salmon Habitat Restoration Project, Phase 2b
Stanislaus County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 11/19/2026

Project Description

The La Grange Salmon Habitat Restoration Phase 2b project (Project) will address the needs of salmonid species that have declined significantly since the1960s, largely due to dredger mining in the Tuolumne River in the early 1900's. This resulted in a simplified and straightened river channel with little complexity and habitat value. The Project will create new side channels, reshape floodplains, add gravel, place large woody debris and boulders, and establish native vegetation. This Phase 2b work will be the second and final section to complete implementation of Phase 2. Phase 2a was funded by a previous WCB grant in February 2026. The Project will create new river channel features and reconnect the river to its historic floodplain by:

- Creating 4 acres of side channel habitat that will be 0.75 miles long
- Reconnecting 16 acres of high and low floodplain habitat
- Increasing channel complexity of the mainstem Tuolumne River and side channels by installing large woody debris and boulders
- Adding gravel for salmon spawning
- Establishing riparian vegetation

Long-Term Management

The Yosemite Rivers Alliance has adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the Project, including management of the Property. If at any time during the 20-year life of the Project's Long-Term Management Period, Grantee 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	Totals
Project Management, Coordination, and Outreach	$180,000	$323,280	$503,280
Permitting	$60,000	$70,500	$130,500
Pre-Construction Surveys, Biological Monitoring, and Resource Monitoring	$200,000	$186,615	$386,615
Engineering and Environmental Oversight of Construction and Contracts	$50,000	$100,300	$150,300
Construction	$2,798,000	$3,661,665	$6,459,665
As-Built Report	$25,000	$25,000	$50,000
Maintenance and Monitoring Plan	$18,000	$18,000	32,000
Indirect Costs	$60,000	---	$60,000
Total	$3,391,000	$4,385,360	$7,776,360

Non-WCB funders include:

- California Department of Water Resources - $4,385,360

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Erika Holcombe, Fish Biologist/Habitat Restoration Coordinator, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Tera Chumley, Director, Stanislaus County Parks and Recreation
- Ron Zanker, Local Landowner

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

Stanislaus County Parks and Recreation, as lead agency, determined that 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. Staff considered the lead agency’s CEQA exemption and, subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Marie Alarado-Gil, District 4
- Assembly: Assemblymember Heath Flora, District 9

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the WCB approve this project as proposed, authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project, and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.



The Tuolumne River channel has been straitened, simplified and disconnected from its historic floodplain. These changes have reduced the habitat value for Chinook Salmon, Steelhead, and other native fish species.



The historic floodplain of the Tuolumne River is now disconnected. This project will reconnect the river to its floodplain and create side channel and floodplain habitat that will benefit Spring-run Chinook Salmon, Fall-run Chinook Slamon, and Steelhead.

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Lodi Fish and Wildlife Office
850 S Guild Ave, Suite 105
Lodi, California 95240

8 July 2026

Aaron Haiman

California Wildlife Conservation Board

715 P Street, 17th Floor

Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: LETTER OF SUPPORT – YOSEMITE RIVERS ALLIANCE GRANT APPLICATION FOR THE LA GRANGE SALMON HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECT, PHASE 2b

Dear Mr. Haiman,

On behalf of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, I am offering support for the Basso/La Grange Reach Floodplain and Spawning Habitat Restoration Project.

If funded, the proposed project would improve floodplain connectivity, increase river channel complexity, create new wetland and side channel habitats, and increase the extent and diversity of the riparian corridor. Building upon previously completed restoration activities at this site will greatly enhance the habitats necessary for successful spawning, rearing, and migration of all life stages of Central Valley salmonids. In addition, the project provides opportunities to engage the public through recreation and education.

Thank you for your careful review of this proposed project. Please feel free to call (209-329-3962) or email (erika_holcombe@fws.gov) me directly if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Fish Biologist/Habitat Restoration Coordinator
Lodi Fish and Wildlife Office

STANISLAUS COUNTY
PARKS & RECREATION

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
Tera Chumley, MPA
DIRECTOR

Vinal Chand
ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER

July 1, 2026

RE: LETTER OF SUPPORT - YOSEMITE RIVERS ALLIANCE GRANT APPLICATION FOR FUNDING FOR THE BASSO/LA GRANGE REACH FLOODPLAIN AND SPAWNING HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECT

Wildlife Conservation Board,

On behalf of the Stanislaus County Department of Parks and Recreation, I am pleased to offer our support for Yosemite Rivers Alliance's grant application to fund the Basso/ La Grange Reach Floodplain and Spawning Habitat Restoration Project.

Stanislaus County acts as the lead agent for the project's Statutory Exemption for CEQA. The project area is also primarily located on Stanislaus County property, and the County has obtained a deed restriction for the project area to protect and preserve the floodplain habitat in perpetuity.

This project presents an important opportunity to further enhance floodplain and spawning habitat for salmonids in the Tuolumne River. As the project area is primarily located on Stanislaus County parkland, it also contributes to the restoration of native riparian vegetation, improving the ecological health and aesthetic value of the site. In doing so, it offers park visitors an opportunity to see restoration in action.

Feel free to contact me if you would like to further discuss our support of the project. Thank you for your consideration of this application.

Sincerely,

Tera Chumley

Tera Chumley
Director

6/19/2026

Dear Wildlife Conservation Board,

As a local landowner who grew up along the Tuolumne River in La Grange, I am writing to express my support for the Yosemite River Alliance's Phase 2b of Basso/ La Grange Reach Floodplain and Spawning Habitat Restoration Project.

I have been actively involved in the planning and implementation of Phase 1 of this project. Additionally, I recently received a grant from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to support the planning and design of a similar habitat restoration project on my property, located just downstream from the Basso/ La Grange site. Immediately after completing Phase 1, juvenile salmon started using the newly created floodplain.

Funding this project will help create a continuous stretch of restored floodplain and critical salmonid spawning habitat in one of the most heavily utilized areas of the Tuolumne River for salmon spawning. Please feel free to contact me if you would like to discuss my support further.

Thank you for your time and for considering this valuable project.

Ron Zanker (209) 769-2450

27. Mount Stakes **Acquisition**
WCB Grant: $2,675,000 **Fee**
Fund Source(s): Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024 (Proposition 4 – Existing Programs), Public Resources Code Section 93010 (SB 105, Sec. 94)
Grantee: The Nature Conservancy
Subgrantee: California Department of State Parks and Recreation
Location: 33 miles west of Patterson, 33 miles west of San Jose
County: Stanislaus and Santa Clara
Acres: 3,856± (Property)

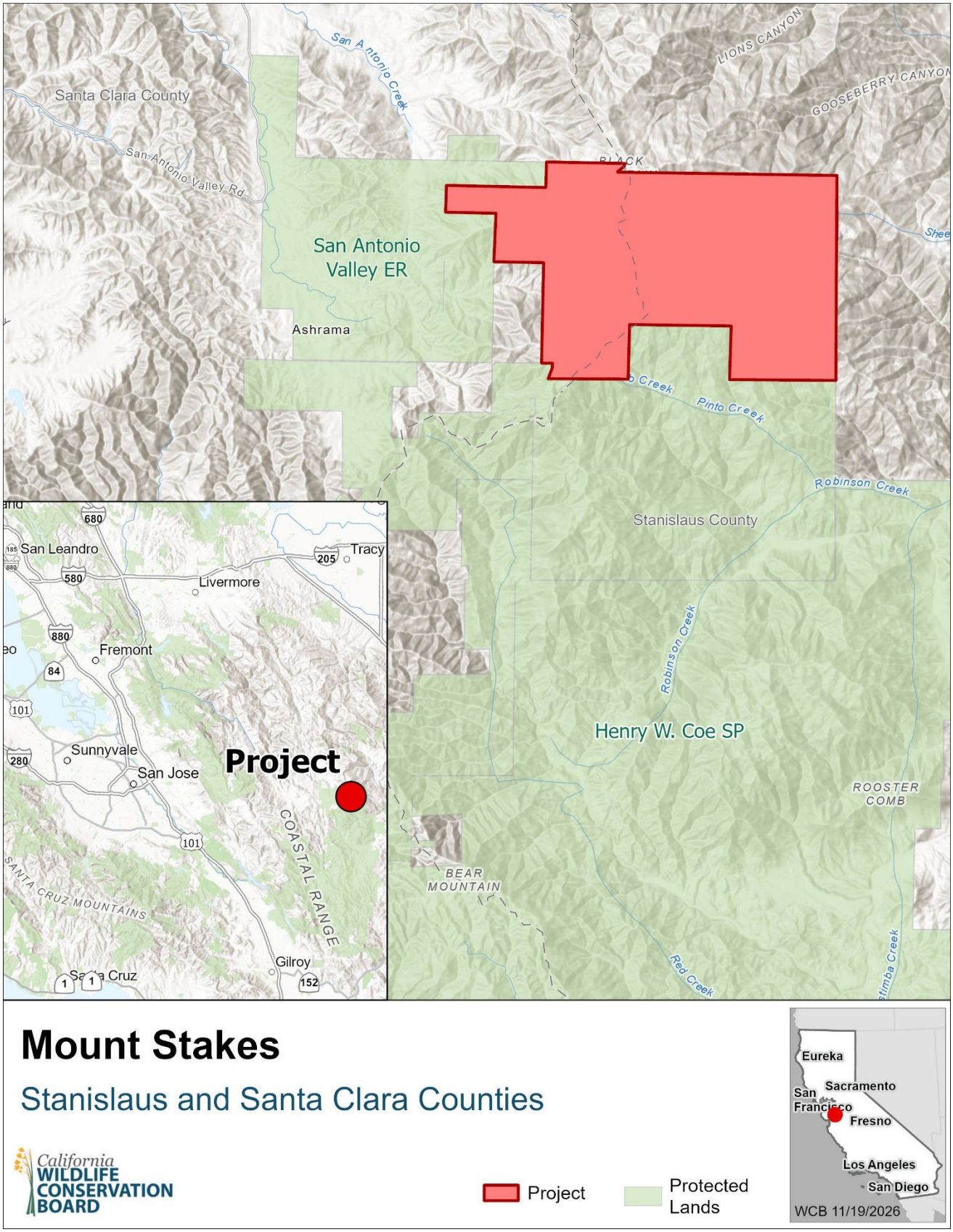
Project Highlights

- The Property is contiguous with Henry W. Coe State Park and the San Antonio Valley Ecological Reserve, creating 93,800-acre block of conserved lands. Conservation of the Property will permit public access while maintaining wildlife corridors and habitat linkages.
- Property sits at 2,640 feet to 3,246 feet above sea level, which provides for climate adaptation as species seek to move across elevational gradients to seek refugia.
- Property contains the highest point in Stanislaus County, likely to become a destination for hikers from Henry W. Coe State Park.
- Habitats include chamise, manzanita, sagebrush, and oak savannah. Over 10 acres of streams and ~1 acre of pond/wetland.
- California tiger salamander (state and federally threatened), foothill yellow legged frog (state endangered, proposed federally threatened), red-legged frog (federally threatened), as well as golden eagle and western spadefoot toad in vicinity. The Property likely supports common wide-ranging species including black bear, mountain lion, bobcat, and black-tailed deer, and has the potential to support other wide-ranging conservation targets including tule elk.
- Grantee purchased the Property in February 2026 with financing provided by a private foundation. WCB grant funding is in accordance with Public Resources code section 95013 authorizing Proposition 4 bond funds to be used for repayment of qualified financing, such as the foundation’s financing, commonly known as a “program-related investment”.
- After repayment of the program-related investment, The Nature Conservancy intends to transfer the Property to State Parks as an expansion of Henry W. Coe State Park.

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Acquisitions

- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B1.1, B2.1, C2.2, P1.3
- Public Access: Yes, as part of Henry W. Coe State Park, the public will be able to access the Property for back country experiences along existing trails


Santa Clara County
San Antonio Creek
San Antonio Valley Rd
LIONS CANYON
GOOSEBERRY CANYON
San Antonio Valley ER
Ashrama
Pinto Creek
Robinson Creek
Stanislaus County
Henry W. Coe SP
Robinson Creek
ROOSTER COMB
BEAR MOUNTAIN
Red Creek
San Leandro
Tracy
Livermore
Fremont
Sunnyvale
San Jose
Project
COASTAL RANGE
SANTA CRUZ MOUNTAINS
Gilroy
680
580
205
880
84
101
280
152
Mount Stakes
Stanislaus and Santa Clara Counties
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 11/19/2026

Long-Term Management

Grantee intends to transfer the Property to State Parks in a no-cost transaction. In September 2026, Grantee entered into a management agreement with State Parks for it to manage the Property as part of Henry W. Coe State Park pending completion of the transfer. Under the WCB grant, State Parks will be responsible for managing the Property as part of the State Park. State Parks anticipates the Property will be added to the Orestimba wilderness park unit, which will require Parks Commission and possibly Legislative approval. The park expansion will be a wilderness back county experience and park facilities will not be constructed. Access to the Property will require a 20-mile hike or bike ride. If the transfer is not approved by State Parks, Grantee will hold the Property and manage it as a conservation preserve consistent with the terms and conditions of the WCB grant agreement.

Project Funding

The Department of General Services approved fair market value is $2,890,000. Grantee purchased the Property in February, the acquisition financing requires only $2,675,000 to be repaid with the remainder representing a conservation donation. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	$2,675,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	$2,675,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Senator Dave Cortese, 15th Senate District
- Edward Sortwell Clement, Jr. Executive Director, Save Mount Diablo

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

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.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Dave Cortese, District 15
- Assembly: Assemblymember Ash Kalra, District 25

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the WCB approve this project as proposed, authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project, and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

2024115 Mount Stakes



1



Mount Stakes is primarily rugged terrain with canyons and valleys and steep hills.

2

CAPITOL OFFICE
1021 O STREET
SUITE 7520
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814
TEL (916) 651-4015

DISTRICT OFFICE
1155 MERIDIAN AVENUE
SUITE 100
SAN JOSE, CA 95125
TEL (408) 723-4154

California State Senate

SENATOR
DAVE CORTESE
FIFTEENTH SENATE DISTRICT

CHAIR
TRANSPORTATION

COMMITTEES
EDUCATION
HOUSING
LABOR, PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT & RETIREMENT
LEGISLATIVE ETHICS
PUBLIC SAFETY

Dr. Jennifer Norris
Executive Director
Wildlife Conservation Board
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

RE: Support for The Nature Conservancy Mount Stakes Project

Dear Dr. Norris:

I write in support of The Nature Conservancy's effort to protect the 3,855-acre Mount Stakes property at the northern end of the San Andreas corridor. Located along the border of Senate District 15, the project would ultimately expand Henry W. Coe State Park, an important recreational resource for residents of the Bay Area and Central Valley.

The proposed acquisition would protect Mount Stakes from development and transfer the property to California State Parks, expanding the Orestimba Wilderness within Henry W. Coe State Park. The project would conserve important chaparral and high-elevation wildlife habitat in the Diablo Range, improve regional habitat connectivity, and increase opportunities for public access and recreation.

I respectfully urge the Wildlife Conservation Board to give the Mount Stakes Project its full consideration.

Sincerely,

Dave Cortese
Senator, 15th District

Save Mount Diablo
PRESERVE • DEFEND • RESTORE • EDUCATE • ENJOY

October 6, 2026

Dr. Jennifer Norris
Executive Director, Wildlife Conservation Board
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

RE: Support for The Nature Conservancy Mount Stakes Project

Dear Dr. Norris,

I am writing to express Save Mount Diablo's support of The Nature Conservancy's effort to protect the 3,855-acre Mount Stakes property within the Diablo Range. TNC and partners have identified the 5.1-million-acre San Andreas corridor, which includes much of the Diablo Range, as a priority landscape for conservation, due to the presence of large, unfragmented but unprotected land, high biodiversity, and high composition of habitat types that are under protected in California's 30x30 goals, like grassland and hardwood woodland.

Save Mount Diablo is a nationally accredited, non-profit land trust founded in 1971. The land conservation mission of Save Mount Diablo is focused on protecting Mount Diablo and the mountain range it is part of and sustained by, the Diablo Range. This year, the California legislature deemed the Diablo Range a California conservation priority in Assembly Concurrent Resolution 107.

This project, which we write this letter of support for, will protect Mount Stakes from development by purchasing the fee title interest and then transferring the property to California State Parks, where it will expand Henry W. Coe State Park's Orestimba Wilderness within the Diablo Range. Henry W. Coe State Park is a largely undeveloped park which welcomes many backpackers, equestrians, mountain bikers, day-hikers, and anyone seeking quiet solitude in a nearly untouched setting. Henry Coe's wildflowers bloom from February to May creating a rich landscape of blue lupine, California poppies, Mariposa lilies, larkspur, and more. The Park's rugged shrublands and oak woodlands support a wide range of terrestrial and avian species and offer Bay Area and Central Valley residents an opportunity for remote recreation. The variety and richness of the flora attract visitors from miles around and adding to the park will only increase its beauty, importance, and value to the public.

The conservation objectives of this acquisition are to protect important chaparral and high elevation wildlife habitat in the Diablo Range, expand habitat connectivity regionally and increase opportunities for public access and recreation. Protecting Mount Stakes avoids land use conversion into remote, rural ranchettes, as has been done recently on adjacent property.

I respectfully request you to give Mount Stakes Project your full consideration.

Sincerely,

Ed

Edward Sortwell Clement, Jr.
Executive Director

ACCREDITED LAND TRUST

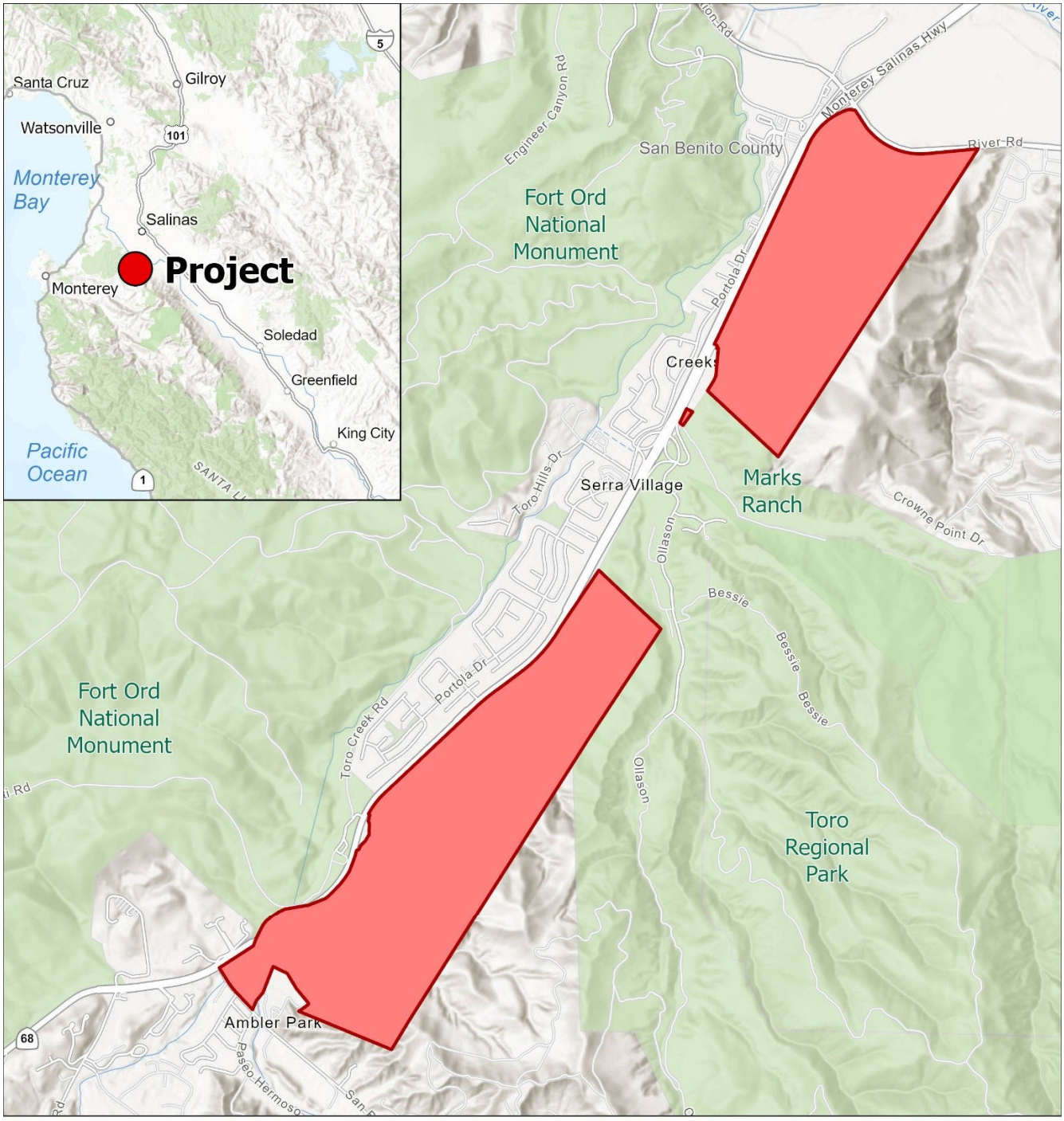
28. Ferrini Ranch **Acquisition**
WCB Grant: $12,500,000 **Fee**
Fund Source(s): Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024 (Proposition 4 – Existing Programs), Public Resources Code Section 93010 (SB 105, Sec. 94)
Grantee: Big Sur Land Trust
Location: Seven miles southeast of the city of Salinas
County: Monterey
Acres: 868± (Property)

Property Highlights

- Habitats represented: oak woodlands and savannas, grassland, coastal scrub, and wetlands.
- A wildlife undercrossing is located on the southern section of the Property, along a portion of State Route 68 designated by CDFW in 2024 as one of 12 top priority wildlife connectivity barriers in the state.
- Property provides access to both sides of the critical regional wildlife undercrossing and is actively used by bobcats, mountain lion, deer, coyote, raccoons, opossums, brush rabbits, Monterey dusky-footed woodrats, skunks, and American badger.
- Key species: California tiger salamander
- Largely untouched open space property.

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: Yes, the population of Salinas would benefit from managed public access and any other land use benefits on the Property. Salinas has roughly 30% of its population designated as disadvantaged or severely disadvantaged per DWR’s DAC mapping tool.
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 2, Execute Strategic Acquisitions
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B1.1, B2.1, C1.2, C2.3, and P2.1
- Public Access: Some amount of managed public access anticipated. However, the specifics of this will be determined once the community land use planning process is completed.



Ferrini Ranch

Monterey County

California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

Project

Protected Lands



Long-Term Management

BSLT will manage the Property in line with the policies and procedures that guide the management of the other protected working lands in its care, which will include creation of a long-term management plan that incorporates a conservation grazing management plan specific to the Property.

Project Funding

The Department of General Services approved fair market value is $26,660,000, and the landowner agreed to sell at a reduced price of $15,000,000. The proposed funding breakdown is as follows:

Partners	Amount
WCB	$12,500,000
DOC	$2,500,000
TOTAL Purchase Price	$15,000,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- None received

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

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.

State Government

- Senate: Senator John Laird, District 17
- Assembly: Assemblymember Robert Rivas, District 29 and Assemblymember Dawn Addis, District 30

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the WCB approve this project as proposed, authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project, and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Ferrini Ranch





Ohlone/Costanoan-Esselen Nation

Previously acknowledged as
The San Carlos Band of
Mission Indians
The Monterey Band
And known as
O.C.E.N. or Esselen Nation
P.O. Box 1301
Monterey, CA 93942

www.ohlonecostanoanesselennation.org.

November 9, 2026

California Wildlife Conservation Board
re: Ferrini Ranch

Saleki Atsa Kendal Webster,

The Ohlone/Costanoan-Esselen Nation (OCEN) is a historically documented previously recognized tribe. OCEN is the legal tribal government representative for six hundred enrolled members of Esselen, Carmeleno, Monterey Band, Rumsen, Chalon, Nuestra Sonora de la Soledad Mission, San Carlos Borromeo de Carmelo Mission and/or Costanoan Mission Indian descent of Monterey County. OCEN families were previously recognized as The San Carlos Band of Mission Indians 1852 by Indian Agent Helen Hunt Jackson, The Monterey Band of Monterey at Sur Rancheria by Special Indian Agent, C.E. Kelsey, and today we are known as O.C.E.N. or Esselen Nation.

Since December 2014 OCEN has protected our aboriginal homeland known as Ferrini Ranch. In 2014, Ferrini Ranch was designated as a large housing project which would result in destruction of CA-MNT-3, 4/267, 661, and 954. Archaeological investigations recorded resources are identified as prehistoric as early as 1948 and other evidence as early as 1929. As I previously stated in 2015 (letter attached) archaeological information dated this homeland to A.D. 1000 to 1525 and with major portions at least one site, "**relatively unaffected by historic disturbance and ranching practices"**. (Archaeological Consulting 1975 and 2006). These sites have yielded evidence of human remains and past burials. This land is an archaeological cemetery that should never be disturbed again.

Recently, I received information from individuals participating with a recently establish group called the Confederation of Ohlone People, that they expected to receive a portion of this site, as this group is working with Big Sur Land Trust. I was advised that they expected to be able to build on this sacred site/cemetery. OCEN currently worked with Big Sur Land Trust on acquiring its aboriginal Land Back, therefore, I contacted Jeannette Tuiltele-Lewis, CEO of Big Sur Land Trust, for information about Ferrini Ranch and the plans being planned by Confederation of Ohlone People. OCEN has not participated with the group as there are individuals with no relationship to our aboriginal land, ancestors and burial grounds. On November 8, 2026, Ms. Tuiltele-Lewis assured me that there would not be a distribution/allocation to the Confederation/Tribes/Nation/Non-Profits or Individuals.

I am attaching a letter I submitted to the Native American Heritage Commission on behalf of OCEN in January 2015, as OCEN worked to protect Ferrini Ranch from development. I am also including a letter dated July 6, 2022, acknowledging Ferrini Ranch as NAHC Site Number: N-MNT-28. OCEN is in support of Big Sur Land Trust acquiring Ferrini Ranch for the protection of our aboriginal homeland and known cemetery/sacred sites. Our request is that there be no disturbance of this cemetery, that there be no distribution to individuals and that OCEN be included in confidential and meaningful consultation. OCEN is aware that the $12,500,000.00 is not enough to acquire Ferrini Ranch and hope that additional funding can be considered.

OCEN TRIBAL GOVERNMENT REQUEST AB52 / SB18, GENERAL PLAN, MEANINGFUL CONSULTATION WITH THE LEAD AGENCIES. OCEN REQUEST CONSULTATION ON PROJECTS WITHIN MONTEREY COUNTY.

Please contact me with any questions at the numbers listed below. I look forward to a date for consultation. Nimasianexelpasaleki

Sincerely and Respectfully Yours,

Louise J. Miranda Ramirez

Louise J. Miranda Ramirez, Tribal Chairwoman
Ohlone/Costanoan-Esselen Nation
(408) 629-5189 or (408) 661-2486

Cc: OCEN Tribal Council, Melissa Leal,
Jeannette Tuiltele-Lewis, BSLT, -- Matthew Lin, NAHC

Ohlone/Costanoan-Esselen Nation

Previously acknowledged as
The San Carlos Band of
Mission Indians
The Monterey Band
And also known as
O.C.E.N. or Esselen Nation
P.O. Box 1301
Monterey, CA 93942

www.ohlonecostanoanesselennation.org.

January 7, 2015

Cynthia Gomez
Executive Secretary
Native American Heritage Commission
1550 Harbor Blvd., Room 100
West Sacramento, CA 95691

Katy Sanchez
Native American Heritage Commission
1550 Harbor Blvd, Suite 100
West Sacramento, CA 95691

Re: Ferrini Ranch Development - CA-MNT-3, CA-MNT-4/267, CA-MNT-661 and CA-MNT-954

Saleki Atsa,

Ohlone/Costanoan-Esselen Nation is the legal tribal government representative for over 600 enrolled BIA documented members of Esselen, Carmeleño, Rumsen, Chalon, San Carlos Mission, Monterey Band of Monterey County and/or Costanoan Mission Indian descent. The direct ancestors of the Ohlone/Costanoan Esselen Nation were baptized at the San Carlos and Soledad Missions and those mission records demonstrate that our tribal members descend from at least nine major rancherias/villages/districts within the greater Monterey Bay region. These rancherias and districts include:

Ensen (located within the interior side of Fort Ord and Salinas Valley)

Achasta (Monterey proper)

Tucutnut/Capanay (middle reaches Carmel River drainage)

Soccoronda/Jummis/Sepponet (upper Carmel River drainage)

Echilat/Ixchenta/Tebityilat (upper San Jose and Las Garzas Creek drainages)

Esselen/Excelen/Excelemac (Santa Lucia Mountains/Ventana Wilderness)

Sargentaruc/Jojopan/Pixchi (Carmel River south to Sur)

Eslanajan (located around [Mission] Soledad/Arroyo Seco)

Though other indigenous people may have lived in the area, nonetheless the greater Monterey Bay Area is the indigenous homeland of our people who were historically federally recognized by the Indian Service Bureau as the **Monterey Band of Monterey County** beginning in 1906. Our ancestors enrolled with the BIA 1928-32, 48-55, 68-72.

Included with this letter please find a territorial map derived by Taylor 1856; Levy 1973; and Milliken 1990, indentifying Tribal areas.

Ohlone/Costanoan-Esselen Nation objects to all excavation in known ancestral heritage site and cultural lands, even when they are described as previously disturbed, and of no significant archaeological value. Yet, the County of Monterey is not hearing our words. Our Ancestral Villages and Ceremonial Burial Sites are being destroyed in the name of progress. I bring to your attention the Ferrini Ranch Development Project report.

The Cultural Resources Report section 3.4 for the Ferrini Ranch Development has been approved by the Monterey County Board of Supervisors. (Article attached) Archaeological investigations recorded resources as early as 1948 and other evidence as early as 1929 and identified sites CA-MNT 3, CA-MNT-4/267 CA-MNT-661 AND CA-MNT-954 located within the project area. CA-MNT-3 and CA-MNT-4/267 are large prehistoric midden sites with subsurface deposits. **The totality of the investigations concludes that the midden deposits represent significant archaeological information with resources dating to A.D. 1000 to 1525 and with major portions of at least one site relatively unaffected by historic disturbance and ranching practices. (Archaeological Consulting 1975 and 2006). These sites have yielded evidence of human remains and past burials.**

Page 3.4-10
According to the cultural resources investigations that have been conducted, there are four identified prehistoric sites (CA-MNT-3, CA-MNT-4/267, CA-MNT-661 and CA-MNT-954) within the project area. CA-MNT-3, CA-MNT-4/267 and CA-MNT-661 are located in an area proposed for development. CA-MNT-954 is a prehistoric site located on a steep slope outside the proposed area of development. Archaeological Consulting identified that sites CA-MNT-3 and CA-MNT-4/267 are large prehistoric sites that could consist of significant subsurface deposits of cultural material and that human remains were recovered from these sites. Although none of these sites are listed in the National Register of Historic Place (NRHP) or California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), Archaeological Consulting determined that sites CA-MNT-3 and CA-MNT-4/267 are eligible for inclusion in the NRHP and the CRHR due to the nature of data recovered. **Sites CA-MNT-661 and CA-MNT-954 are also prehistoric sites consisting of bedrock mortars.**

Page 3.4-11 - Mitigation Measures
The project applicant shall modify the proposal to avoid CA-MNT-661, CA-MNT-3, CA-MNT-4/267 in accordance with the Cultural Resources Mitigation and Monitoring Plan for the Proposed Ferrini Ranch Development, South of Salinas, Monterey County, California, prepared by Archaeological Consulting in November 2007.

Page 3.4-15 Mitigation Measures - MM 3.4-3
Implementation of the proposed project could result in the potential destruction or damage to previously undiscovered or unknown sites, paleontological deposits, historic sites, and human remains during construction activities. **This would be a potentially significant impact.**

Page 3.4-16 Cumulative Impacts and Mitigation Measures - Cumulative Impact on Cultural Resources

Impact 3.4-4 Implementation of the proposed project, when combined with reasonably foreseeable similar development in the vicinity and Monterey County, could contribute incrementally to the loss of the region's important Cultural assets. Loss of resources at the Ferrini Ranch property could be considered a significant contributor to cumulative loss of like prehistoric resources in this portion of Monterey County. This would be considered a potentially significant cumulative impact.

The limited and fragmented distribution of cultural resources in the county, together with their fragility, makes these resources particularly sensitive to incremental loss associated with land use changes, development and time. The proposed project, when combined with other proposed, planned reasonably foreseeable, and approved project in Monterey County, could impact known and unknown cultural resources and paleontological resources associated with Native American use and occupation of the area, as well as historic resources associated with EuroAmerican settlement, farming, and economic development.

Louise Ramirez Assigned as MLD

As assigned by the Native American Heritage Commission, I served as the Most Likely Descendant (MLD) on CA-MNT-3 to rebury an Ancestor that was disturbed by the tenant digging a garden with a backhoe and trenched rows six (6) feet deep. Archaeological Consulting was the firm chosen by the owner. Mr. Breschini choosing not to work with Ohlone/Costanoan-Esselen Nation as the MLD advised the owner she did not have to accept our request that the remains be moved and protected from the tenant. I was advised by the representative that I could bury the remains, or she would rebury without our involvement.

Currently on behalf of OCEN, I am serving as the NAHC assigned MLD on CA-MNT-3 with Far Western and P.G. & E who are trying to determine the boundaries of CA-MNT-3. With the first test excavations fragmented ancestral human remains were found. CA-MNT-3 is a large site with continued disturbance since it is inclusive of Highway 68.

The OCEN Tribal leadership continuously requests to be contacted with 1) surveys, 2) subsurface testing, 3) presence/absence testing, 4) mitigation and recovery programs, 5) reburial of any of our ancestral remains, and 6) placement and curation of all our ancestral cultural items. We request that a Native American Monitor from Ohlone/Costanoan-Esselen Nation, approved by the OCEN Tribal Council be used within our aboriginal territory.

Please be advised that it is our first priority that our ancestor’s remains be protected and undisturbed. We desire that all cultural and sacred burial items be left with our ancestors on site, where they are discovered or upon a suitable relocation never to be disturbed again. We ask that there be a written agreement to determine title of all non-burial artifacts. We ask for the same respect that is afforded all of our current-day deceased family members, by no other words these burial sites are cemeteries, respect for our ancestors as you would expect respect for any recently deceased family members in today’s cemeteries.

Our definition of respect constitutes no disturbance. Aware that despite our objection, disturbance continues, many of our ceremonial burial grounds are being disturbed within Monterey County. OCEN request that the Native American Heritage Commission support Ohlone/Costanoan-Esselen Nation in protection our Ancestors. Furthermore, we also would like for the NAHC to obtain documentation from these various archaeological firms as to where our ancestral remains are reburied, after all how can these reburial sites be protected if they remain unrecorded?

I can be contacted at (408) 629-5189.

Sincerely,

Louise J. Miranda Ramirez, Chairperson
Ohlone/Costanoan-Esselen Nation
(408) 629-5189

Cc: OCEN Tribal Council
Planning Dept. Monterey County

STATE OF CALIFORNIA Gavin Newsom, *Governor*

NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION

CHAIRPERSON
Laura Miranda
Luiseño

VICE CHAIRPERSON
Reginald Pagaling
Chumash

PARLIAMENTARIAN
Russell Attebery
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SECRETARY
Sara Dutschke
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COMMISSIONER
William Mungary
Paiute/White Mountain Apache

COMMISSIONER
Isaac Bojorquez
Ohlone-Costanoan

COMMISSIONER
Buffy McQuillen
Yokayo Pomo, Yuki, Nomlaki

COMMISSIONER
Wayne Nelson
Luiseño

COMMISSIONER
Stanley Rodriguez
Kumeyaay

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
Raymond C. Hitchcock
Miwok/Nisenan

NAHC HEADQUARTERS
1550 Harbor Boulevard
Suite 100
West Sacramento,
California 95691
(916) 373-3710
nahc@nahc.ca.gov

July 6, 2022

Louise Miranda-Ramirez, Chairperson
Ohlone/Costanoan-Esselen Nation
P.O. Box 1301
Monterey, CA 93942

Re: Sacred Lands File (SLF) Inventory Confirmation

Dear Chairperson Miranda-Ramirez:

The purpose of this letter is to notify you that the following site, nominated by the Ohlone/Costanoan-Esselen Nation, was added to the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) Sacred Lands File Inventory, pursuant to California Public Resources Code §5097.94 (a) (b) (c) and California Public Resources Code §5097.96, which authorize the NAHC to identify and catalog places of special religious or social significance to California Indian Tribes. Under this authorization, the following site was entered into the Sacred Lands File (SLF), on the date specified:

Site Name: Ferrini Ranch
Location: Monterey County
NAHC Site Number: N-MNT-28
Date Entered into the SLF: 7/1/2022

The California Public Records Act (Government Code Sections §6254.13(r) and §6254.10) allow the NAHC to maintain the confidentiality of information provided by tribes to document their Sacred Lands File Inventory nominations. The NAHC considers the ownership of all information provided by tribes for nominations to the SLF Inventory to remain with the originating tribe, including their nature and specific location. Therefore, pursuant to these codes, the NAHC does not disclose Sacred Lands File Inventory information provided by a California Indian tribe to any other parties, including other Indian tribes, government agencies, private companies, or private individuals.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me by email at Andrew.Green@nahc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Andrew Green

Andrew Green
Cultural Resources Analyst

Ferrini Ranch public comment

To: Wildlife Conservation Board
Email: WCB@wildlife.ca.gov
Re: November 19, 2026 meeting, Item 28 - Ferrini Ranch

Date

11/15/26

Dear Chair and Members of the Wildlife Conservation Board:

As a member of the public, I urge the Board to pair the proposed public investment in Ferrini Ranch with clear commitments to meaningful public access, including nonmotorized bicycling and connections to neighboring public recreation lands. Conservation acquisition is an important opportunity. Its public benefits should include practical opportunities for the public to experience and enjoy the land.

The staff proposal recommends a $12.5 million WCB grant toward acquisition of approximately 868 acres by Big Sur Land Trust. It anticipates managed public access, but leaves the details to future planning. I ask that access objectives and an accountable planning timetable be made explicit in the grant and subsequent management process, to the extent within WCB's authority.

Public access must be usable in practice

A property can be described as publicly accessible while appointments, permits, narrow booking windows and mandatory guides make ordinary visits difficult. For suitable routes and areas, the baseline should be predictable posted hours and self-directed use, comparable in practical availability to county parks and BLM recreation lands. Organized guided programs can complement that access; they should not be its only form.

Include bicycles and regional connections

The use plan should affirmatively include bicycling and other compatible forms of human-powered travel and recreation. I ask that bicycles not be categorically prohibited across Ferrini Ranch. Where a restriction is necessary, it should be supported by a specific site condition, narrowly applied and periodically reviewed.

Please require consideration of through-connections to neighboring parcels and existing regional routes, in coordination with the relevant owners and public land managers. Compatible uses should remain connected across boundaries wherever feasible, rather than creating an isolated access gap. I am not asserting that existing rights already permit crossing any particular adjacent property; those connections should be evaluated and secured through the planning process.

Start with a responsible interim-access trial

While the permanent use plan is developed, please evaluate a monitored trial on appropriate existing routes. A trial can establish clear hours and boundaries, include bicycles where suitable, collect information about use and stewardship, and set a public review date. It offers a constructive alternative to leaving access undefined for an open-ended period.

Protect specific resources without default exclusion

I support targeted protection of sensitive cultural and habitat areas. Carefully planned human-powered access can be compatible with those objectives and can strengthen public awareness, understanding and stewardship through firsthand experience. Sensitive locations can receive focused safeguards without unnecessarily restricting the entire property.

I therefore ask WCB and Big Sur Land Trust to establish a public schedule for access planning; identify the proposed routes, use designations and reasons for any restrictions; invite local recreation organizations and members of the public to participate; and report progress toward opening suitable areas. Public funding should deliver conservation and meaningful, equitable public access together.

Thank you for considering these requests.

Sincerely,

Your full name

Kenneth Chrisman

City / community (optional)

Monterey Bay

Email address (optional)

Kennethchrisman@me.com

Complete the shaded fields, save a copy, and review it before emailing. This form does not submit itself. Personal information included in a public comment may become part of the public record.

Chavez, Sabrina@Wildlife

From: mike.mcgirr@icloud.com
Sent: Monday, November 16, 2026 10:53 AM
To: Wildlife Conservation Board
Subject: Farini Ranch

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

You don't often get email from mike.mcgirr@icloud.com. Learn why this is important

WARNING: This message is from an external source. Verify the sender and exercise caution when clicking links or opening attachments.

Dear All,

I am writing as a citizen supporting bicycle access to the Farini Ranch and to request that access objectives and responsibilities be incorporated into the grant and management process. Further, trail connectivity to local and regional trails should be an important element of the land use plan.

I support posted open hours and self-guided use to be allowed on suitable routes.

Kind Regards,

Mike McGirr
1081 San Vincente Ave., Salinas, CA 93901
321.4321.5322

Chavez, Sabrina@Wildlife

From: Nicole Nedeff <nikki@ventanaview.net>
Sent: Monday, November 16, 2026 10:21 AM
To: Walsh, John@Wildlife
Cc: Wildlife Conservation Board
Subject: Agenda Item #28, Ferrini Ranch - WCB Meeting November 19, 2026

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Some people who received this message don't often get email from nikki@ventanaview.net. Learn why this is important

WARNING: This message is from an external source. Verify the sender and exercise caution when clicking links or opening attachments.

Hello –

I am a local ecologist and whole-heartedly support Big Sur Land Trust's grant request for $12.5 million to secure the acquisition of the Ferrini Ranch in Monterey County.

The 868-acre Ferrini Ranch has been a critical acquisition target for many years and is an important puzzle piece in a landscape-scale habitat mosaic of conserved lands in the Central California region. Adjacent to the Salinas Valley, Toro Regional Park and the BSLT Marks Ranch Preserve, the Ferrini Ranch provides a key wildlife connection between the northerly Sierra de Salinas range and Fort Ord National Monument.

The local community has had an enduring commitment to the conservation of the Ferrini Ranch and the work to protect this important property was a collaborative endeavor undertaken by The Trust for Public Land and Big Sur Land Trust.

Thank you for sharing my support for the Ferrini Ranch acquisition grant to Big Sur Land Trust.

Nicole Nedeff
Carmel Valley, CA

29. Laguna Coast Wilderness Park **Restoration**
WCB Grant: $1,945,000 **Implementation**
Fund Source(s): California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), Public Resources Code Section 80111(b)
Grantee: Laguna Canyon Foundation
Landowner: Orange County Parks
Location: Laguna Woods
County: Orange

Project Highlights

- Located on the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park (Park)
- Habitats restored: Three acres of coastal sage scrub (CSS), eight acres of cactus scrub, and three acres of riparian scrub will be restored, and 53 acres of annual and perennial grasslands, CSS, and Alkali Marsh habitats will be enhanced
- Key species: California coastal gnatcatcher, Pacific pocket mouse, coastal cactus wren and grasshopper sparrow, white-tailed kite, and Crotch's bumblebee
- Regional or Species Plan: Natural Community Conservation Plan and Habitat Conservation Plan (NCCP/HCP) for Central and Coastal Subregion of County of Orange and the Resource Management Plan for Laguna Coast Wilderness Park
- Project will include ADA-compliant educational signage in both English and Spanish.
- Herbicide will be used as described in the Project's Herbicide Use Questionnaire.

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: No
- Tribal Partnerships: No
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 4: Enhance Conservation of Existing Public Lands and Coastal Waters and Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B2.1, C2.2


William R. Mason Regional Park
South-Quail Hill Open Space Preserve
FRENCH HILL
Turtle Rock Dr
South-Shady Canyon Open Space Preserve
South-Bommer Canyon Open Space Preserve
SHADY CANYON
BOMMER CANYON
San Joaquin Hills
Newport Beach
Laguna Coast Wilderness Park
Aliso Viejo
Ridge Park Rd
SAN JOAQUIN HILLS
Laguna Coast Wilderness Park
MUDDY CANYON
Crystal Cove SP
MORO CANYON
EMERALD CANYON
Laguna Coast Wilderness Park
Aliso and Wood Canyons Wilderness Park
LAGUNA CANYON
WOOD CANYON
Laguna Beach
Alta Laguna Blvd
N Coast Hwy
Laguna Canyon Rd
Alton Pkwy
Harvard Ave
Culver Dr
Jamboree Rd
MacArthur Blvd
San Miguel Dr
Dove St
Rancho Cucamonga
El Monte
Ontario
Corona
Anaheim
Santa Ana
Huntington Beach
Irvine
Lake Forest
Mission Viejo
Laguna Niguel
San Clemente
Pacific Ocean
Project
Laguna Coast Wilderness Park Restoration
Orange County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 11/19/2026

Project Description

The Laguna Coast Wilderness Park Restoration project (Project) site is within a portion of the Park known as “Parcel 5”. Parcel 5 was type converted to non-native annual grassland by a history of livestock grazing that greatly altered the natural soils and introduced invasive, non-native plants, resulting in the displacement of native flora and a reduction in the quality of wildlife habitat. The Project will improve the habitat value of this area for species dependent on coastal sage scrub, cactus scrub, and grassland habitats by:

- Removing non-native plants using mechanical and chemical methods.
- Installing native plants originated from local sources within coastal Orange County using seed, containers, plugs, cactus pads, and cuttings.
- Restoring 14 acres and enhancing 57 acres of various habitats historically found in the Park.
- Maintaining newly installed plants through weeding and hand watering until they are established.
- Providing an opportunity for volunteers and the Orange County Conservation Corps to meaningfully contribute to habitat restoration in the Park.

Long-Term Management

Orange County Parks adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the Project, including management of the property. If at any time during the 20-year life of the Project, Grantee 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	Totals
Project Management	$207,186	$10,000	$217,186
Site Preparation	$539,955	$118,334	$658,289
Site Maintenance	$169,318	$118,333	$287,651
Plant Establishment	$663,719	$158,333	$822,052
Monitoring	$188,066	---	$188,066
Indirect Costs	$176,756	---	$176,756
Total	$1,945,000	$405,000	$2,350,000

Non-WCB funders include:

- Laguna Canyon Foundation - $75,000
- Orange County Conservation Corps - $280,000
- Orange County Parks - $50,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Jonathan Snyder, Acting Field Supervisor, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Pam Passow, Director, Orange County Parks
- Danny Fry, Science Coordinator, Natural Communities Coalition
- Nathan Gregory, PhD., Senior Vice President and Chief Programs Officer, Irvine Ranch Conservancy
- Gayle Waite, President, Laguna Canyon Conservancy
- Norm Grossman, President, Laguna Greenbelt, Inc.

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

The project is proposed as exempt from the CEQA pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15304, Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land, consisting of minor public alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation. Subject to approval of this proposal by the WCB, the appropriate Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Tony Strickland, District 36
- Assembly: Assemblymember Diane B. Dixon, District 72

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the WCB approve this project as proposed, authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project, and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.

Herbicide use questionnaire

Please describe current vegetation conditions and composition at project site. Provide a description or list of the dominant native and invasive plant species, any rare or sensitive species, percent cover of invasive species, and if they occur in monocultures or mixed communities with natives.

The Parcel 5 "*Restoring and Enhancing Habitats for Multiple Protected Species in Laguna Coast Wilderness Park"* project comprises approximately 71 acres within Laguna Coast Wilderness park in the Laguna Canyon Watershed. Presently, Parcel 5 consists predominantly of annual, non-native grassland along with many non-native, invasive plants such as *Bromus spp., Cynara cardunculus, Rumex crispus, Brassica nigra, Hirschfeldia incana, Centaurea melitensis,* and *Brachypodium spp.* Distribution of these plants occur both in monocultures and mixed with native plants including perennial bunchgrass (e.g., *Stipa pulchra),* bulbs (e.g., *Dipterostemma capitatum, Bloomeria crocea)* and perennial shrubs (e.g., *Artemesia californica, Eriogonum fasciculatum, Ericameria pinii*). Invasive plant control through integrated pest management (including both mechanical and chemical treatment) is essential to achieve the primary goal of this project, which is to restore the project area to multiple healthy ecosystems with key structures to support wildlife species of special concern (including coastal California gnatcatcher, least Bell's vireo, white-tailed kite, grasshopper sparrow, coastal cactus wren and others). Without adequate site preparation and maintenance throughout the plant establishment phase, the invasive species will outcompete plants installed through seed, cuttings (cactus pads, mulefat cuttings), and containers.

Please describe which herbicides and adjuvants will be used, including tank mix concentrations, application rates, and timing of application. Where applicable, identify selective herbicides that will be used to target specific plant life forms (grasses, broadleaf, wood, etc.).

Specific plant life forms targeted are the following:

- Invasive annual grass seeds (pre-emergent)
- Invasive annual grasses (post-emergent)
- Perennial & annual invasive grasses & broadleaf weeds
- Perennial trees & wood stems.

Each of these will use different active ingredients, concentrations, application rates, and adjuvants. These are based on Orange County Parks Pest Control Advisor programmatic recommendations made in 2025. Chemical treatments to be used for this project have been summarized in **Table 1**.

Table 2 shows proposed chemical treatments based on target plant life forms.

Target Plant Life Forms	Timing	Brand Name	Active Ingredient	Signal Word	EPA Registration #	Dilution Rate	Application Rates
Pre-emergent selective for invasive annual grasses.	Early Season (October - January)	Dimension Ultra 40WP	dithiopyr	Caution	62719-445 - Herbicide	.05 lb Active Ingredient per Acre	Determined w/ Calibration
		Lesco Tracker (or equivalent blue dye)	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.50%	0.6 oz/gal water
Annual invasive grasses.	Early Season (October - January)	Fusilade DX	fluazifop-p-butyl	Caution	100-1070 - Herbicide	0.05%	0.6 oz/gal water
		Liberate	soyal phospholipids	Warning	34704-50030 - NIS Surfactant/Drift Control	0.50%	0.6 oz/gal water
		Lesco Tracker (or equivalent blue dye)	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.50%	0.6 oz/gal water
Perennial & annual invasive grasses & broadleaf weeds.	Mid Season (January - May)	Round Up Custom	glyphosate	Caution	524-343 - Herbicide	1.50%	2 oz/gal water
		Rainier EA	Polyoxyethylene polyol fatty acid ester, butyl lactate and alcohol ethoxylate phosphate ester	Caution	2935-50200 - NIS Surfactant	0.50%	0.6 oz/gal water
		Lesco Tracker (or equivalent blue dye)	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.50%	0.6 oz/gal water

Perennial trees & woody stems. (Cut Stump)	Late Season (May - July)	Round Up Custom	glyphosate	Caution	524-343 - Herbicide	50.00%	64 oz/gal water
		Lesco Tracker (or equivalent blue dye)	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.50%	.6 oz/gal water

If your project will use glyphosate, have other herbicides been considered to eliminate glyphosate usage? If not, why was glyphosate chosen as the preferred herbicide?

This project will use different herbicides depending on the target plant life form. Although glyphosate will be used, it is expected that usage of different herbicides throughout the season will minimize overall glyphosate usage. Specifically, Dimension Ultra 40WP (dithiopyr) will be used in the early season as a selective pre-emergent for grasses and Fusilade DX (fluazifop-p-butyl) will be used for early season treatment of annual grasses. Glyphosate will be used for post-emergent control of perennial & annual invasive grasses & broadleaf weeds. Glyphosate is an effective, systemic, cost-effective, broad spectrum herbicide that controls all the target invasive weed species, which is not the case for other synthetic alternatives. Using glyphosate as proposed will result in no soil residency or potential for runoff, as any minimal spray not directly absorbed by the target plants rapidly binds to the soil and becomes inert. It is widely considered to be one of the safest products in its class, both in terms of ecological and worker toxicity.

If your project includes the use of a glyphosate product, have safer formulations (i.e. those registered for aquatic applications) or alternative herbicides been considered to reduce the potential for non-target environmental impacts? Please provide justification for the formulations and tank mixes selected as the preferred approach.

This project utilizes an IPM approach that will be using glyphosate and multiple other alternative herbicides. Only herbicides and adjuvants approved for aquatic use, such as Round Up Custom, are used near perennial and ephemeral waterways.

Alternative herbicides such as Dimension Ultra 40WP and Fusilade DX will be used to selectively target non-native annual grasses and reduce the potential for non-target environmental impacts to native vegetation. The formulations used in Table 1 are referenced from the OC Parks 2025 PCA recommendations.

We considered a tank mix of a grass-specific and broad-leaf specific herbicides, such as fluazifop and triclopyr, but determined that glyphosate would be the most environmentally

friendly due to reducing the risk of leaching into water resources and other non-target environmental impacts.

If adjuvant(s) will be used in this project, are safer products that do not contain nonylphenol (often listed as "alkylphenol ethoxylate" on labels) being used to reduce the potential for non-target environmental impacts?

The following adjuvants will be used in this project: Rainier EA and Liberate. The active ingredient in Rainier EA is "polyoxyethylene polyol fatty acid ester, butyl lactate and alcohol ethoxylate phosphate ester" (Table 1) and is stated as NPE free by Wilbur Ellis. The active ingredient in Liberate is soyal phospholipid.

Please describe any non-chemical treatments that will be used to minimize the amount and/or concentration of herbicides used at the project site. What negative effects might these treatments have on the biological community?

As this project will be using an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach, the following non-chemical treatments will be used to reduce the amount of herbicide used:

- *Mowing* will be used when herbicide application is not possible due to weather conditions (i.e. high winds, forecasted rain) or logistical considerations (i.e. permitting delays, required trail buffers). Mowing will also be used if invasive species are too large or developed (i.e. flowering) to control safely and adequately with herbicide. Mowing is also used to remove flower heads to reduce exposure of invertebrate pollinators to herbicides.
- *Hand weeding* will be used to remove invasive species from in and around native plants and seedlings, as well as in trail buffers. Hand weeding will also be used in areas with less than 10% germinating non-native cover, and in areas of the project with substantial intact native vegetation.

Both mowing and hand-weeding have the potential for impacts on the biological community. Potential impacts include trampling of native forbs & shrubs due to increased repeated access required to attain successful treatment, as well as potential noise and vegetation disturbance that may impact nesting birds and other wildlife species.

Please describe all herbicide application measures the project will employ to reduce negative impacts to water quality, non-target plant species, pollinators, and other wildlife species.

The following best management practices (BMPs) will be used to reduce negative impacts:

- All herbicide applications are done by highly trained employees who follow all federal, state, local, and organizational regulations and guidelines.
- LCF staff are trained in identification of target and non-target plant species.

- LCF staff are trained to minimize drift during application by maintaining awareness of nozzle height, checking spray patterns, and adjusting nozzles as needed.
- Only herbicides and adjuvants approved for aquatic use are used near perennial and ephemeral waterways.
- Applications do not occur if windspeed is forecasted to be above 10 mph or if rain is expected in the next 24-48 hours.
- In accordance with OC Parks Policies, we do not apply herbicide within 10 ft of unpaved or 20 ft of paved trails. Temporary fencing is erected when making applications within 50 ft of trails.
- LCF has an organizational Spill Prevention and Mitigation Plan in place that includes keeping well-stocked spill clean-up kits on-site and performing all mixing, loading, and repairs in spill-proof trays.
- Herbicide is not applied to flowering plants when pollinators are present.

Would removal of invasive weeds within the project area be possible using only non-chemical methods (hand-pulling, mowing, burning, etc.)? Please describe whether biocontrol has been considered and why or why not it was incorporated in to the IPM approach for this project.

Removal of invasive weeds using only non-chemical methods is not feasible for this project. Due to the 71-acre scope of this project, usage of only non-chemical methods will result in an increased need for labor that LCF does not have the capacity to provide.

Additionally, the need for multiple re-entries, more workers, and increased levels of vegetation disturbance using these methods could result in additional disturbance of the sensitive wildlife species present on this site, including the grasshopper sparrow, coastal CA gnatcatcher, least Bell's vireo and white-tailed kite.

Other non-selective methods of control, such as grazing and prescribed fire are not feasible either. LCF's extensive experience of the use of goat grazing for fuel modification purposes in Laguna Beach has shown that it can cause unintended consequences, including soil erosion, compaction, and introduction of novel invasive species. Due to the proximity to developed areas, prescribed fire will not be feasible due to safety and air quality concerns.

Please provide a total cost estimate for using only non-chemical removal methods for the invasive species where this approach would be possible. Please estimate both the project cost and long-term management costs, including an estimate of any additional personnel or contracts required.

Assuming LCF could find adequate labor, using only mowing and/or hand weeding could cost 6 to 10 times as much as current costs based on studies done by another organization doing similar work in our area. If this project were to be completed without herbicide, costs related to Site Maintenance, Site Preparation, and Plant Establishment would be drastically increased.

Total project cost is estimated to be increased to a minimum of $11,126,000 for the full 5-year project, resulting in a $8,837,000 increase needed to be compensated for primarily through contractor support.

For California Department of Fish and Wildlife owned/managed properties only:
Have you worked with CDFW's Pest Control Advisor to develop an integrated past management plan that uses the safest and most effective herbicide formulation(s) and application method(s) for your project?

n/a



Hillside Dominated by Non-Native Grasses



Invasive Mustard Plant

United States Department of the Interior
U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Ecological Services
Carlsbad Fish and Wildlife Office
2177 Salk Avenue, Suite 250
Carlsbad, California 92008

In Reply Refer To:
2025-0101622-INFO-TA-OR

June 6, 2025
Sent Electronically

Wildlife Conservation Board
c/o California Department of Fish and Wildlife
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, California 94244-2090

Subject: Laguna Canyon Foundation Grant Application to the Wildlife Conservation Board Titled "Restoring and Enhancing Habitats for Multiple Protected Species in Laguna Coast Wilderness Park (Parcel 5, Phase 1)"

Dear Wildlife Conservation Board:

We are writing to express the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) support for projects that restore habitat adjoining the Orange County Central and Coastal Subregions Natural Community Conservation Plan/Habitat Conservation Plan (NCCP/HCP) habitat reserve system, such as is proposed in the Laguna Canyon Foundation's "Restoring and Enhancing Habitats for Multiple Protected Species in Laguna Coast Wilderness Park (Parcel 5, Phase 1)" proposal that has been submitted to the Wildlife Conservation Board.

The NCCP/HCP was adopted in 1996 by the County of Orange, local jurisdictions, private landowners, and utilities to provide for effective conservation of a broad range of habitats and species while continuing to allow for appropriate development and growth in the central and coastal subregions of Orange County. The conservation strategy included creation of a habitat Reserve and implementation of adaptive management within that reserve to protect a variety of listed and unlisted animal and plant species including the federally endangered Pacific pocket mouse, threatened coastal California gnatcatcher, coastal cactus wren, threatened Laguna Beach dudleya, intermediate mariposa lily and others.

Most of Laguna Coast Wilderness Park (LCWP) falls within the Reserve, but Parcel 5 is not formally within the boundary of the Reserve because it was protected with a conservation easement and added to LCWP following adoption of the NCCP/HCP. The proposed restoration of habitat adjoining the Reserve improves the effectiveness of the NCCP/HCP conservation strategy by complementing and enhancing habitat values within a larger area of protected habitat. Thus, Laguna Canyon Foundation's proposal has potential to improve the success of the NCCP/HCP for the conserved species by increasing the effective area that is restored and managed for those species.

Should you have any questions regarding this letter of support, please contact William B. Miller[1] at 760-431-9440, extension 206.

Sincerely,

Digitally signed by
KRISTINE PETERSEN
Date: 2025.06.06 10:19:29
-07'00'

for Jonathan Snyder
Acting Field Supervisor

[1] William_B_Miller@fws.gov.

DYLAN WRIGHT
DIRECTOR
OC COMMUNITY RESOURCES

CYMANTHA ATKINSON
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
OC COMMUNITY RESOURCES

JOANNE VEEDOR
DIRECTOR
ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

MONICA SCHMIDT
DIRECTOR
OC ANIMAL CARE

JULIA BIDWELL
DIRECTOR
OC HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

RENEE RAMIREZ
DIRECTOR
OC COMMUNITY SERVICES

PAM PASSOW
DIRECTOR
OC PARKS

JULIE QUILLMAN
COUNTY LIBRARIAN
OC PUBLIC LIBRARIES

OC Community Resources

April 1, 2025

Wildlife Conservation Board

Subject: Laguna Canyon Foundation's Laguna Wilderness Coast Park Parcel 5 Phase 1 Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Plan.

To Whom it May Concern,

Parcel 5 of the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park, owned and managed by the County of Orange, OC Parks, is part of the 22,000-acre South Coast Wilderness system of coastal canyons and watersheds in south Orange County. It contains a wealth of geological, archaeological, paleontological, and human history.

Laguna Canyon Foundation has submitted a grant request to restore and enhance 61 acres of type-converted non-native annual grassland located within Laguna Coast Wilderness Park within area referred to as Parcel 5.

This program seeks to improve the habitat value of this area for the species dependent on Coastal Sage Scrub and/or Grassland habitat through targeted invasive weed control, coordination with regulatory agencies, restoration and enhancement of native habitat, and educating surrounding communities.

The grant will help implement policies established in the September 1998 Resource Management Plan for Laguna Coast Wilderness Park. The specific goal found in the *Resource Management Plan Goals and Objectives* section is:

- Biological Resource Protection, Enhancement and Restoration

OC Parks and Laguna Canyon Foundation have a successful history of collaboration that helps preserve and enhance our wild lands. We encourage restoration and enhancement projects such as this one.

We ask that you approve this grant funding allocation to Laguna Canyon Foundation and thank you for your consideration of the meaningful project.

Sincerely,

Pam Passow
Director, OC Parks

4/1/25
Date

OCparks
13042 OLD MYFORD ROAD
IRVINE, CA 92602
PHONE: 866.OCPARKS

June 2, 2025

Wildlife Conservation Board
c/o CDFW
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

Re: Support for Laguna Canyon Foundation's Parcel 5, Phase 1 Habitat Restoration Project

Dear Members of the Wildlife Conservation Board,

As the coordinating entity of County of Orange Central & Coastal Subregion Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP)/Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP), the Natural Communities Coalition (NCC) strongly supports the Laguna Canyon Foundation's Parcel 5, Phase 1 habitat restoration project. Parcel 5—a 71-acre site within Laguna Coast Wilderness Park (OC Parks)—has been identified as a high priority for restoration in NCC's 2019 Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Plan (HREP), and this proposal presents an exemplary implementation of those Plan goals.

Collaborative Commitment to NCCP/HCP Goals
The Parcel 5 design embraces the landscape-scale, adaptive approach outlined in the NCCP/HCP and HREP update by:

- Removing invasive non-native grasses and preparing the seedbed through targeted weed management.
- Reseeding and enriching a mosaic of habitats, including 3 acres of Coastal Sage Scrub, 8 acres of Cactus Scrub, 3 acres of Elderberry Scrub, plus enhancement of 53 acres of grassland, 3 acres of Coastal Sage Scrub, and 1 acre of alkali marsh—methods directly drawn from the HREP's adaptive weed-management and seed-based restoration protocols.

By following the NCCP/HCP's science-based prescriptions—prioritizing ecologically suitable plant communities, managing invasive seed banks, and fostering natural recruitment—this project exemplifies best practices for restoring the South Coast Wilderness.

Benefits to Sensitive Species
Parcel 5 will also bolster habitat for multiple sensitive bird species:

- Coastal California Gnatcatcher (federally threatened)

- Coastal Cactus Wren (California Species of Special Concern)
- White-tailed Kite (California Fully Protected Species)
- Grasshopper Sparrow (California Species of Special Concern)

The establishment of contiguous scrub, grassland, and riparian cover will improve foraging, nesting, and dispersal corridors—the recovery of these avian species.

Partnership and Stewardship
The NCC looks forward to collaborating with Laguna Canyon Foundation on adaptive management, monitoring, and fire-management integration—leveraging our collective expertise to ensure that restoration delivers measurable, lasting benefits across the broader NCCP/HCP reserve system.

We respectfully urge the Wildlife Conservation Board to support funding for Parcel 5 Phase 1. This investment will translate directly into on-the-ground restoration that fulfills NCCP/HCP commitments, strengthens recovery of sensitive species, and sustains the ecological integrity of Orange County's coastal wildlands.

Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,

Danny Fry
Digitally signed by Danny Fry
DN: cn=Danny Fry, o=Natural Communities Coalition, ou, email=dfry@occonservation.org, c=US
Date: 2025.06.02 15:29:53 -07'00'

Science Coordinator

IRVINE RANCH CONSERVANCY

May 14, 2025

Wildlife Conservation Board

Re: Support for Laguna Canyon Foundation to restore Parcel 5 of Laguna Coast Wilderness Park

To Whom it May Concern,

On behalf of Irvine Ranch Conservancy (IRC), I am writing to support the proposal from Laguna Canyon Foundation (LCF) to restore and enhance 61 acres of non-native annual grassland in an area known as Parcel 5 within Laguna Coast Wilderness Park, which is owned and managed by Orange County Parks. This project aims to improve habitat quality for species dependent on coastal sage scrub and grassland habitats through ecological restoration, targeted invasive plant control, and education and outreach to surrounding communities.

As a frequent collaborator with LCF with a shared mission, IRC is well positioned to evaluate and endorse this project. Both the State of California and the US Department of Interior have designated nearly 40,000 acres of open space in Orange County the Irvine Ranch Natural Landmarks. These public lands are contained within the California Floristic Province, a biodiversity hotspot, and are protected in perpetuity and owned by a collection of public landowners. On behalf of these landowners, IRC protects, restores, and enhances approximately 30,000 acres of this landscape while ensuring environmentally responsible and sustainable public access. Laguna Coast Wilderness Park is part of the Landmarks and adjacent to protected wildlands owned by the City of Irvine and managed by IRC.

As a result, the proposed restoration project will have benefits beyond the 61-acre footprint by enhancing connectivity within the broader reserve system. Additionally, it will be complemented by ecological restoration, targeted invasive plant control, monitoring, and community outreach work occurring in the adjoining open space. This includes collaborative fire prevention and resiliency work along roadways bordering Laguna Coast Wilderness Park that will contribute to the long-term impact, sustainability, and resiliency of the proposed project.

Thank you for your consideration. IRC greatly looks forward to supporting LCF in this endeavor.

Sincerely,



Nathan Gregory, PhD.
Senior Vice President and Chief Programs Officer

4727 Portola Parkway, Irvine, Ca 92602 | 714.508.4757 | FAX 714.508.4758

P.O. Box 1383, Laguna Beach, CA 92652 • www.LagunaCanyonConservancy.org

May 22, 2025

Wildlife Conservation Board
c/o CDFW
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 942244-2090

RE: Support for Laguna Canyon Foundation's Grant Application to Restore Parcel 5 Phase 1

Dear Wildlife Conservation Board members,

The Laguna Canyon Conservancy (LCC) is a non-profit, all-volunteer environmental organization founded in 1988 to Save and Protect Laguna Canyon. LCC members have been long involved in community efforts to expand the South Coast Wilderness nature reserves of Orange County that now include over 22,000 acres of parks, open space, and marine preserves.

The Board of Directors of LCC is very supportive of our environmental partner Laguna Canyon Foundation's restoration plans for the Parcel 5 Phase 1 71-acre habitat in Laguna Coast Wilderness Park and urges approval of all funding and assistance possible to complete this project.

This unique area in the rich and diverse California Floristic Province is a vital part of the South Coast Wilderness ecosystem and has been designated as a high priority by the Orange County NCC. This project will remove invasive plants, restore and enhance native habitats, benefit wildlife and preserve a truly beautiful place for future generations.

Having a qualified and dedicated organization like the Laguna Canyon Foundation (LCF) leading this project will ensure that important steps are not overlooked and lead to successful results. There will be much coordination and collaboration needed between numerous stakeholders, and the LCF is very experienced in this type of management. LCF is also very good at engaging the community at large and this task is becoming even more important with climate change getting less and less critical attention.

We appreciate your diligent efforts on behalf of the residents of California and our valuable resources. Thank you in advance for supporting this project.

Sincerely,

Gayle Waite

Gayle Waite
949-887-3247
President, Laguna Canyon Conservancy

May 27, 2025

Wildlife Conservation Board
c/o CDFW
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

Re: Support for Laguna Canyon Foundation's Parcel 5 Phase 1 Habitat Restoration Project

Dear Members of the Wildlife Conservation Board,

On behalf of Laguna Greenbelt, Inc., I am pleased to offer strong support for the Laguna Canyon Foundation's Parcel 5 Phase 1 habitat restoration project. Since our founding in 1968 to preserve an open-space greenbelt around Laguna Beach, Laguna Greenbelt has championed collaborative efforts to save and steward over 22,000 acres of coastal wildlands.

Parcel 5 represents a unique opportunity to extend and strengthen this greenbelt legacy. The project's restoration design will:

- **Remove invasive non-native species** and prepare the seedbed for native reestablishment.
- **Reseed and enrich multiple plant communities**, including Coastal Sage Scrub, Cactus Scrub, Elderberry Scrub, grassland, and alkali marsh riparian habitat—providing a diverse mosaic that echoes the natural patterns of the South Coast Wilderness.

By implementing these measures, Parcel 5 will enhance corridor connectivity between Laguna Coast Wilderness Park and adjacent preserves—furthering Laguna Greenbelt's mission to link and protect open spaces for wildlife. The restored habitats will offer critical foraging, nesting, and dispersal areas for sensitive species such as coastal sage scrub birds, while also increasing resilience to wildfire and climate impacts across the corridor.

Laguna Greenbelt looks forward to partnering with Laguna Canyon Foundation on stewardship activities, volunteer events, and outreach to ensure this restoration project not only succeeds ecologically but also deepens community engagement in our shared goals.

We respectfully urge the Wildlife Conservation Board to fund this vital restoration effort on Parcel 5. Thank you for your consideration and for supporting landscape-scale conservation in Southern California.

Sincerely,

Norm Grossman, President
Laguna Greenbelt, Inc.

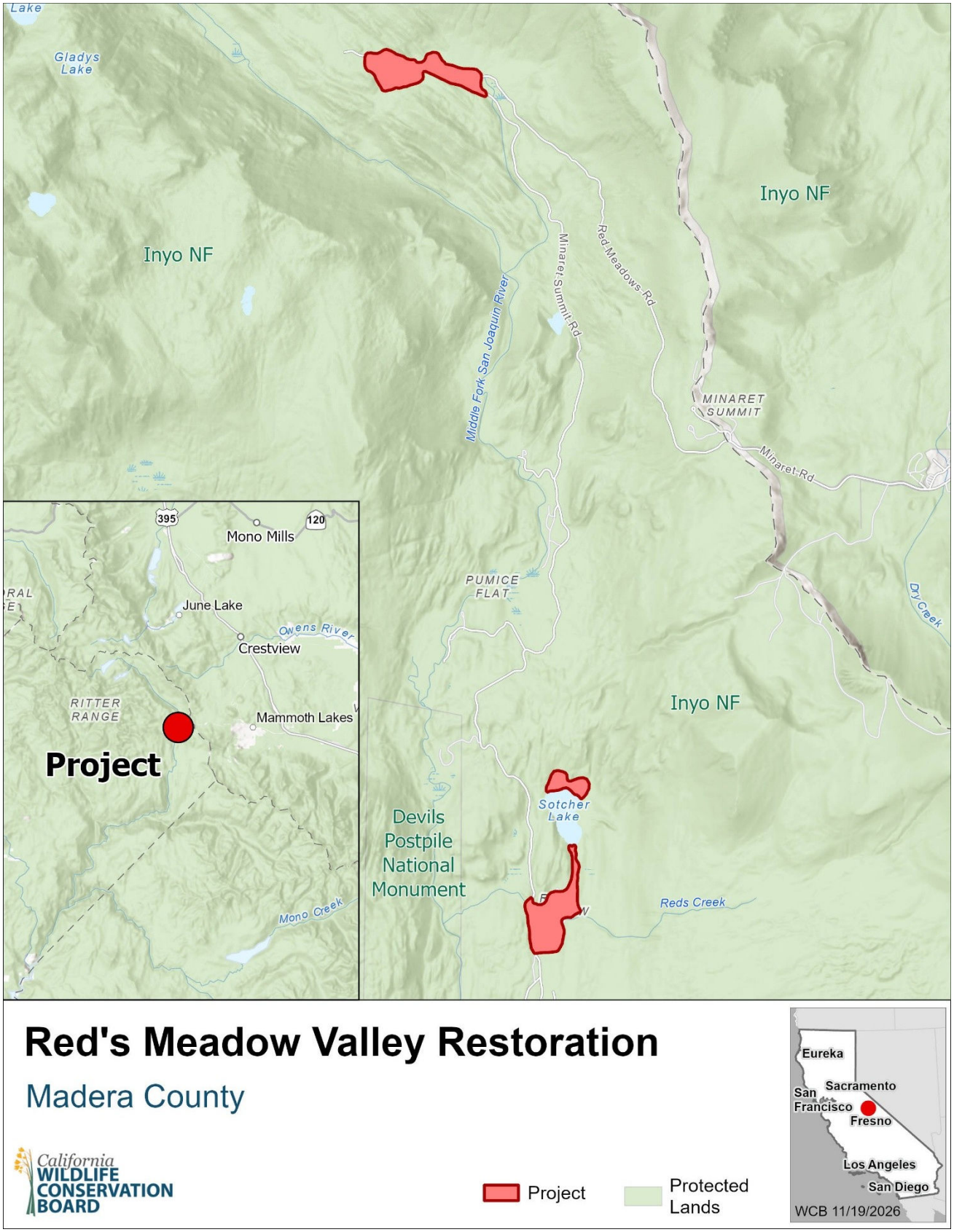
30. Red's Meadow Valley **Restoration**
WCB Grant: $2,676,000 **Implementation**
Fund Source(s): Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024 (Proposition 4 – Existing Programs), Public Resources Code Section 93010 (SB 105, Sec. 94)
Grantee: John Muir Trail Wilderness Conservancy
Landowner: U.S. Forest Service, Inyo National Forest
Location: Ten miles west of Mammoth Lakes
County: Madera

Property Highlights

- Protects and restores sensitive spring mound fens within a larger meadow complex
- Restores mountain meadow habitat
- Contributes to larger, comprehensive restoration project throughout Red's Meadow Valley
- North Fork Mono Tribe members participated in project planning and will participate in implementation, including the use of traditional ecological knowledge

Priority Metrics

- Benefits Justice Communities: Yes, within DAC on land open for public recreation with risk of future high heat events. The project increases carbon sequestration, reduces risk of pollution exposure due to wildfire, and modulates heat effects.
- Tribal Partnerships: Yes, the North Fork Mono Tribe participated in project planning and will participate in implementation.
- Pathways to 30x30: Pathway 4, Enhance Conservation of Existing Public Lands and Coastal Waters; and Pathway 6, Expand and Accelerate Environmental Restoration and Stewardship
- WCB Strategic Plan Target: B1.3, B3.4, C1.1, C2.1, C2.3


Lake
Gladys Lake
Inyo NF
Inyo NF
Middle Fork San Joaquin River
Minaret Summit Rd
Red Meadows Rd
MINARET SUMMIT
Minaret Rd
PUMICE FLAT
Dry Creek
Inyo NF
Devils Postpile National Monument
Sotcher Lake
Reds Creek
395
120
Mono Mills
June Lake
Owens River
Crestview
RITTER RANGE
Mammoth Lakes
Project
Mono Creek
Red's Meadow Valley Restoration
Madera County
California WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
Project
Protected Lands
Eureka
Sacramento
San Francisco
Fresno
Los Angeles
San Diego
WCB 11/19/2026

Project Description

The Red's Meadow Valley Restoration (Project) project is situated along the Middle Fork of the San Joaquin River within a short drive from Mammoth Lakes and offers access to multiple Sierra attractions: Devil's Postpile National Monument, Minaret Falls, Sotcher Lake, Rainbow Falls, and trailheads to the iconic John Muir Trail and Ansel Adams Wilderness. The Project area in Red's Meadow Valley is currently in a degraded state due to road development, grazing, mining, removal of indigenous stewardship, and disrupted ecological disturbance regimes. This resulted in conifer encroachment, eroding and incising stream channels, and a shift to dryer upland conditions within historic meadow footprints. This shift imperils rare spring mound peat fens located within the Project area, which play an outsized role in carbon sequestration. The Project will restore 97 acres of meadow habitat to increase biodiversity and climate refugia by:

- Installing approximately 300 beaver dam analogs within 6,200 linear feet of stream channel
- Removing encroached conifers from 15 acres of meadow habitat
- Installing 1,200 linear feet of exclusionary fencing to protect highly sensitive habitat from grazing
- Improving road conditions to reduce erosion and disruption to meadow hydrology

Long-Term Management

The John Muir Trail Wilderness Conservancy adopted a Management Plan that guides management actions for the Project, including management of the property. If at any time during the 20-year life of the Project's Long-Term Management Period, Grantee 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	Totals
Project Management	---	$647,000	$647,000
Forest Restoration	---	$113,000	$113,000
Meadow Restoration	$2,501,000	$135,000	$2,636,000
Riparian Recreation Improvements	---	$2,121,000	$2,121,000
Monitoring	---	$122,000	$122,000
Indirect	$175,000	$250,000	$425,000
Total	$2,676,000	$3,388,000	$6,064,000

Non-WCB funders include:

- John Muir Trail Wilderness Conservancy - $500,000
- California Natural Resources Agency - $2,860,000

- U.S. Forest Service, Inyo National Forest - $28,000

Letters of Support or Opposition

Support:

- Ron Goode, Chairman, North Fork Mono Tribe
- Robert “Bobby” Macauley, Supervisor, Madera County Board of Supervisors
- Jennifer Kreitz, Chair, Mono County Board of Supervisors
- Jennifer Roeser, Supervisor, Inyo County Board of Supervisors
- Nathan Sill, Acting Forest Supervisor, Inyo National Forest, U.S. Forest Service
- Steph Muchovej, Mayor, City of Bishop
- Amanda Rice, Mayor, Town of Mammoth Lakes
- Matt Freitas, California Headwaters Program Manager, American Rivers
- Jessica Strickland, California Inland Trout Program Manager, Trout Unlimited, Inc.
- Laura Beardsley, Executive Director, Whitebark Institute
- Wendy Schneider, Executive Director, Friends of the Inyo
- John Wentworth, President/CEO, Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access Foundation

Opposition:

- None received

CEQA

The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board, as lead agency, determined that 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. Staff considered the lead agency’s CEQA exemption and, subject to approval of this proposal by WCB, the appropriate NOE will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

State Government

- Senate: Senator Marie Alvarado-Gil, District 04
- Assembly: Assemblymember David J. Tangipa, District 42

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommend that the WCB approve this project as proposed, authorize staff to enter into appropriate agreements necessary to accomplish this project, and authorize staff and CDFW to proceed substantially as planned.



Red’s Meadow—Incised/erosive channel



Red’s Meadow—spring mound fen

Wildlife Conservation Board June 17, 2026

Charlton Chuck" Bonham, WCB Chairman
Dr. Jennifer Norris, WCB Executive Director
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

re: JMT Wilderness Conservancy Reds Meadow Valley Restoration Project—
2026 WCB Implementation Grant Application

On behalf of the North Fork Mono Tribe, I am writing in support of the above-referenced Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) grant application submitted by the JMT Wilderness Conservancy (JMT Wild) and urge your approval. This grant will fund restoration of the meadow eco-systems and riparian corridor along 6 miles of the Middle Fork of the San Joaquin River adjacent to the John Muir Trail (JMT). The area is in Reds Meadow Valley (RMV) west of the Town of Mammoth Lakes and is a prime recreational access point for the Sierra Nevada.

The San Joaquin is one of the critical river ways in California, the longest and most biodiverse. With its three forks, the Middle Fork that moves through Reds Meadow Valley is supplied from the headwaters in the Ansel Adams Wilderness bordered by the Ritter Range and highlighted by Thousand Island Lake. This region is not only vital as a natural resource for the State, but is also a source of prime wilderness recreation.

We understand that the project will employ Low-Tech Process-Based Restoration (LTPBR) techniques to focus on restoring the important and sensitive meadows and riparian areas within RMV. In addition to internal and peripheral restoration, its 6 public campgrounds will also be reorganized to re-locate campsites out of meadows and riparian areas to more durable terrain which is able to sustain recreation within these sensitive environments.

High elevation meadows and riparian terrain such as those within RMV are especially important, as they retain water and sustain year-round flows to California s great rivers, improve water quality, store carbon, and are biodiversity hotspots. Restored wet meadows also serve as natural firebreaks and support overall forest health. This is a project should be prioritized and funded.

The North Fork Mono Tribe strongly supports such restoration projects, particularly in our home meadows, and respectfully asks for your approval of the WCB Implementation Grant application submitted by JMT Wilderness Conservancy.

Respectfully Submitted,

The NORTH FORK MONO TRIBE

Hon. *Ron W. Goode*
Ron Goode
Chairman

June 16, 2026

Wildlife Conservation Board
Charlton "Chuck" Bonham, WCB Chairman
Dr. Jennifer Norris, WCB Executive Director
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

RE: JMT Wilderness Conservancy Reds Meadow Valley Restoration Project—
2026 WCB Implementation Grant Application

On behalf of District 5 in Madera County, California, I am writing in support of the above-referenced Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) grant application submitted by the JMT Wilderness Conservancy (JMT Wild) and urge your approval. This grant will fund restoration of the meadow eco-systems and riparian corridor along 6 miles of the Middle Fork of the San Joaquin River adjacent to the John Muir Trail (JMT). The area is in Reds Meadow Valley (RMV) west of the Town of Mammoth Lakes and is a prime
recreational access point for the Sierra Nevada.

The San Joaquin is one of the critical river ways in California, the longest and most biodiverse. With its three forks, the Middle Fork that moves through Reds Meadow Valley is supplied from the headwaters in the Ansel Adams Wilderness bordered by the Ritter Range and highlighted by Thousand Island Lake. This region is not only vital as a natural resource for the State, but is also a source of prime wilderness recreation.

I understand that the project will employ Low-Tech Process-Based Restoration (LTPBR) techniques to focus on restoring the important and sensitive meadows and riparian areas within RMV. In addition to internal and peripheral restoration, its 6 public campgrounds will also be reorganized to re-locate campsites out of meadows and riparian areas to more durable terrain which is able to sustain recreation within these sensitive environments.

High elevation meadows and riparian terrain such as those within RMV are especially important, as they retain water and sustain year-round flows to California's great rivers, improve water quality, store carbon and are biodiversity hotspots. Restored wet meadows also serve as natural firebreaks and support overall forest health. This project should be prioritized and funded. As Madera County Board of Supervisor for District 5, I strongly support such restoration projects and respectfully ask for your approval of the WCB Implementation Grant application submitted by JMT Wilderness Conservancy.

Sincerely,

Robert "Bobby" Macaulay
Madera County Supervisor, District 5

RM/md

SUPERVISOR BOBBY MACAULAY, DISTRICT 5
200 W. Fourth Street • Madera, CA 93637 • 559.662.6050 • Robert.Macaulay@maderacounty.com • maderacounty.com

Jennifer Kreitz~District One Rhonda Duggan~District Two Paul McFarland~District Three
John Peters~District Four Lynda Salcido~District Five

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF MONO

P.O. BOX 715, BRIDGEPORT, CALIFORNIA 93517
(760) 932-5530
BOS@mono.ca.gov
Queenie Barnard, Clerk of the Board

Wildlife Conservation Board

June 24, 2026

Charlton "Chuck" Bonham, WCB Chairman
Dr. Jennifer Norris, WCB Executive Director
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

Re: *JMT Wilderness Conservancy Reds Meadow Valley Restoration Project - 2026 WCB Implementation Grant Application*

Please accept this letter in support of the JMT Wilderness Conservancy Reds Meadow Valley Restoration grant request to the California Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB). This request will fund active restoration of meadow ecosystems and riparian corridors along 6 miles of the Middle Fork of the San Joaquin River adjacent to the John Muir Trail (JMT). While the project area is in Reds Meadow Valley just west of the Sierra Crest, the main access road and trails to Reds originate within Mono County and the Town of Mammoth Lakes. The natural ecosystems and recreational infrastructure to be restored and enhanced through this project help sustain our tourism-driven economy.

After more than a century of meadow and riparian impacts, the critical wetlands of the Reds Meadow Valley require intervention and active restoration to revitalize and assure their long-term health.

As designed, the project will employ Low-Tech Process-Based Restoration (LTPBR) techniques, and six popular public campgrounds will have campsites moved out of meadows and riparian areas to more durable, appropriate terrain.

High elevation Sierran meadow systems such as those within Reds Meadow Valley are especially important, as they retain water and sustain year-round flows to California's great rivers, improve water quality, store carbon, and are biodiversity hotspots. Ecologically functional wet meadows also serve as natural fuel breaks.

Mono County strongly supports this restoration project and respectfully asks for your approval of the WCB Implementation Grant application submitted by JMT Wilderness Conservancy.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Kreitz

Jennifer Kreitz

Chair, Mono County Board of Supervisors

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF INYO

JENNIFER ROESER
FOURTH DISTRICT SUPERVISOR

P.O DRAWER N,
INDEPENDENCE, CA 93526

DISTRICT OFFICE (760) 878-8609
INDEPENDENCE (760) 878-0373
jroeser@inyocounty.us

Wildlife Conservation Board
Damon Nagami, WCB Chairman
Dr. Jennifer Norris, WCB Executive Director
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

June 19th, 2026

re: JMT Wilderness Conservancy Reds Meadow Valley Restoration Project—
2026 WCB Implementation Grant

On behalf of residents and constituents of our county, I am writing in support of the above-referenced Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) grant application submitted by the JMT Wilderness Conservancy (JMT Wild) and urge your approval. This grant will fund restoration of the meadow eco-systems and riparian corridor along 6 miles of the Middle Fork of the San Joaquin River adjacent to the John Muir Trail (JMT). The area is in Reds Meadow Valley (RMV) west of the Town of Mammoth Lakes and is a prime recreational access point for the Sierra Nevada.

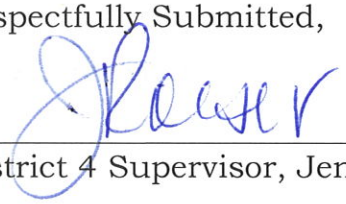
RMV is an important portal to the JMT and the high Sierra Nevada. This popular recreational area includes critical habitat and ecosystems which require active management to allow for ongoing use and enjoyment. In addition, meadow restoration, channel improvements and analog beaver dams are critical tools in fire prevention and restoration of natural systems.

We understand that the project will employ Low-Tech Process-Based Restoration (LTPBR) techniques to focus on restoring the important and sensitive meadows and riparian areas within RMV. In addition to internal and peripheral restoration, its 6 public campgrounds will also be managed and restored to relocate campsites out of meadows and riparian areas to more durable terrain which is able to sustain recreation within these sensitive environments.

High elevation meadows and riparian terrains such as those within RMV are especially important, as they retain water and sustain year-round flows to California's great rivers, improve water quality, store carbon, and are biodiversity hotspots. Restored wet meadows also serve as powerful natural firebreaks and support overall forest health. Now more than ever, this is a project that must be prioritized and funded.

As an elected representative of Inyo County, I enthusiastically join the Inyo National Forest, the Town of Mammoth Lakes, Mono County, the Mammoth Lakes Trails & Public Access Foundation (MLTPAF), the Eastern Sierra Sustainable Tourism Partnership, Friends of the Inyo and others, in support of the WCB Implementation Grant application submitted by the JMT Wilderness Conservancy.

Respectfully Submitted,



District 4 Supervisor, Jennifer Roeser

USDA United States Department of Agriculture | Forest Service | Pacific Southwest Region

Inyo National Forest
351 Pacu Lane, Suite 200
Bishop, CA 93514
(760) 873-2400 Voice
(760) 873-2538 Text (TDD)

File Code: 2520

Date: June 16, 2026

Wildlife Conservation Board
Charlton "Chuck" Bonham, WCB Chairman
Dr. Jennifer Norris, WCB Executive Director
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

re: JMT Wilderness Conservancy Reds Meadow Valley Restoration Project—
2026 WCB Implementation Grant

On behalf of the United States Forest Service, Inyo National Forest, I am writing in support of the above-referenced Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) grant application submitted by the JMT Wilderness Conservancy (JMT Wild) and urge your approval. This grant will fund much-needed restoration of the meadow ecosystems and riparian corridor along 6 miles of the Middle Fork of the San Joaquin River adjacent to the John Muir Trail (JMT). The area is within the Inyo National Forest in Reds Meadow Valley (RMV) west of the Town of Mammoth Lakes and is a prime recreational access point for the Sierra Nevada.

RMV is an important portal to the JMT and the high Sierra Nevada. More than a century of impacts have affected ecosystems here, including the loss of the natural fire regime. Its complex and critical ecosystems now require intervention and active restoration to revitalize and assure their long-term health.

We understand that the project will employ Low-Tech Process-Based Restoration (LTPBR) techniques to focus on restoring the important and sensitive meadows and riparian areas within RMV. In addition to internal and peripheral restoration, its 6 public campgrounds will also be managed and restored to relocate campsites out of meadows and riparian areas to more durable terrain which is able to sustain recreation within these sensitive environments.

High elevation meadows and riparian terrain such as those within RMV are especially important, as they retain water and sustain year-round flows to California's rivers, improve water quality, store carbon, and are biodiversity hotspots. Restored wet meadows also serve as powerful natural firebreaks and support overall forest health.

The Inyo National Forest strongly supports this work and is deploying significant resources in personnel to assure its success. We sincerely ask for support of the WCB Implementation Grant application submitted by the JMT Wilderness Conservancy.

Sincerely,

NATHAN SILL

Digitally signed by NATHAN SILL
Date: 2026.06.16 11:03:25 -07'00'

NATHAN SILL
Acting Forest Supervisor

CITY OF BISHOP

377 West Line Street – Bishop, CA 93514
P.O. Box 1236 – Bishop, CA 93515
City Hall (760) 873-5863 – Fax (760) 873-4873

June 22, 2026

Wildlife Conservation Board
Charlton "Chuck" Bonham, WCB Chairman
Dr. Jennifer Norris, WCB Executive Director
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

RE: JMT Wilderness Conservancy Reds Meadow Valley Restoration Project—
2026 WCB Implementation Grant Application

Dear Mr. Bonham and Dr. Norris:

The City of Bishop supports the above-referenced Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) grant application submitted by the JMT Wilderness Conservancy (JMT Wild) and urge your approval. This grant will fund restoration of the meadow eco-systems and riparian corridor along 6 miles of the Middle Fork of the San Joaquin River adjacent to the John Muir Trail (JMT). The area is in Reds Meadow Valley (RMV) west of the Town of Mammoth Lakes and is a prime recreational access point for the Sierra Nevada.

The San Joaquin is one of the critical river ways in California, the longest and most biodiverse. With its three forks, the Middle Fork that moves through Reds Meadow Valley is supplied from the headwaters in the Ansel Adams Wilderness bordered by the Ritter Range and highlighted by Thousand Island Lake. This region is not only vital as a natural resource for the State but is also a source of prime wilderness recreation.

We understand that the project will employ Low-Tech Process-Based Restoration (LTPBR) techniques to focus on restoring the important and sensitive meadows and riparian areas within RMV. In addition to internal and peripheral restoration, its six public campgrounds will also be reorganized to re-locate campsites out of meadows and riparian areas to more durable terrain which is able to sustain recreation within these sensitive environments.

High elevation meadows and riparian terrain such as those within RMV are especially important, as they retain water and sustain year-round flows to California's great rivers, improve water quality, store carbon, and are biodiversity hotspots. Restored wet meadows also serve as natural firebreaks and support overall forest health.

The City of Bishop strongly supports such restoration projects and respectfully asks for your approval of the WCB Implementation Grant application submitted by JMT Wilderness Conservancy.

Sincerely,

Stephen Muchovej
Mayor

TOWN OF MAMMOTH LAKES
Town Council
PO Box 1609 • Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546
760-965-3610 • townofmammothlakes.ca.gov

Wildlife Conservation Board June 17, 2026
Charlton Chuck" Bonham, WCB Chairman
Dr. Jennifer Norris, WCB Executive Director
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

re: JMT Wilderness Conservancy Reds Meadow Valley Restoration Project—
2026 WCB Implementation Grant Application

On behalf of the Town of Mammoth Lakes, I am writing in support of the above-referenced Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) grant application submitted by the JMT Wilderness Conservancy (JMT Wild) and urge your approval. This grant will fund restoration of the meadow eco-systems and riparian corridor along 6 miles of the Middle Fork of the San Joaquin River adjacent to the John Muir Trail (JMT). The area is in Reds Meadow Valley (RMV) west of the Town of Mammoth Lakes and is a prime recreational access point for the Sierra Nevada.

RMV is an important portal to the JMT and the high Sierra Nevada. More than a century of impacts have damaged the eco-systems there, including road and recreational development, natural resource mining and exploitation, grazing of cattle, sheep and pack stock, the dislocation of indigenous cultures who lived and stewarded the environments here, and now decades of increasing visitor use and recreational impacts. Its complex and critical ecosystems now require intervention and active restoration to revitalize and assure their long-term health.

We understand that the project will employ Low-Tech Process-Based Restoration (LTPBR) techniques to focus on restoring the important and sensitive meadows and riparian areas within RMV. In addition to internal and peripheral restoration, its 6 public campgrounds will also be reorganized to re-locate campsites out of meadows and riparian areas to more durable terrain which is able to sustain recreation within these sensitive environments.

High elevation meadows and riparian terrain such as those within RMV are especially important, as they retain water and sustain year-round flows to California s great rivers, improve water quality, store carbon, and are biodiversity hotspots. Restored wet meadows also serve as natural firebreaks and support overall forest health. This is a project should be prioritized and funded.

Mammoth Lakes strongly supports this kind of work in our region, and respectfully asks for your approval of the WCB Implementation Grant application submitted by JMT Wilderness Conservancy.

Respectfully Submitted,

TOWN OF MAMMOTH LAKES

Amanda Rice (Jun 17, 2026 14:48:42 PDT)

By_____

Amanda Rice

Mayor

June 12, 2026

California Wildlife Conservation Board
Dr. Jennifer Norris, Executive Director
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

Dear Dr. Norris,

On behalf of American Rivers, I am writing in support of the JMT Wilderness Conservancy's grant application for the Red Meadow Valley Restoration Project. This grant will fund restoration of the meadow ecosystems and riparian corridor along 6 miles of the Middle Fork of the San Joaquin River adjacent to the John Muir Trail (JMT). The area is in Reds Meadow Valley (RMV) west of the Town of Mammoth Lakes and is a prime recreational access point for the Sierra Nevada.

The San Joaquin is one of the critical river ways in California. The Middle Fork that moves through Reds Meadow Valley is supplied from the headwaters in the Ansel Adams Wilderness bordered by the Ritter Range and highlighted by Thousand Island Lake. This region is not only vital as a natural resource for the state but is also a source of prime recreation.

We understand that the project will employ low-tech process-based restoration (LTPBR) techniques to focus on restoring the important and sensitive meadows and riparian areas within RMV. In addition to internal and peripheral restoration, its 6 public campgrounds will also be reorganized to relocate campsites out of meadows and riparian areas to more suitable terrain for recreation.

High elevation meadows and riparian systems such as those within RMV are especially important, as they retain water and sustain year-round flows to California's rivers, improve water quality, store carbon, and are biodiversity hotspots. Restored wet meadows also serve as natural firebreaks and support overall forest health. This is a project that should be prioritized and funded.

American Rivers' mission is to protect wild rivers, restore damaged rivers and conserve clean water for people. American Rivers supports this restoration project and encourages WCB to fund the grant application submitted for the project.

Sincerely,

Matt Freitas
California Headwaters Program Director

Wildlife Conservation Board
Dr. Jennifer Norris
WCB Executive Director
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

June 12, 2026

re: JMT Wilderness Conservancy Reds Meadow Valley Restoration Project—
2026 WCB Implementation Grant Application

On behalf of Trout Unlimited (TU), I am pleased to express our strong support for JMT Wilderness Conservancy's Reds Meadow Valley Restoration Project in the Inyo National Forest. This grant will fund meadow and riparian area restoration along 6 miles of the Middle Fork of the San Joaquin River adjacent to the John Muir Trail (JMT). The area is in Reds Meadow Valley (RMV) west of the Town of Mammoth Lakes and is a prime recreational access point for the Sierra Nevada.

RMV is an important portal to the JMT and the high Sierra Nevada. More than a century of impacts have damaged the ecosystems there, including road and recreational development, natural resource mining and exploitation, livestock grazing, the dislocation of indigenous cultures who lived and stewarded the environments here, and now decades of increasing visitor use and recreational impacts. Its complex and critical ecosystems now require intervention and active restoration to revitalize and assure their long-term health.

We understand that the project will employ Low-Tech Process-Based Restoration (LTPBR) techniques to focus on restoring the important and sensitive meadows and riparian areas within RMV. In addition to internal and peripheral restoration, its six public campgrounds will also be reorganized to re-locate campsites out of meadows and riparian areas to more durable terrain which is able to sustain recreation within these sensitive environments.

Trout Unlimited works across the Southern Sierra Nevada to advance forest health, watershed resilience, and recreation-based stewardship. The project reflects the type of integrated, holistic restoration strategy needed to address long-standing watershed degradation while building long-term ecological resilience. Trout Unlimited has implemented over 30 headwater LTPBR meadow restoration projects on Forest Service lands throughout the headwaters of the Sierra Nevada and thus have an appreciation and understanding for the goals and expected outcomes of JMT Wilds's proposed project. For the above-stated reasons, Trout Unlimited gladly supports RMV Restoration Project.

Sincerely,

Jessica Strickland
California Inland Trout Program Director
Trout Unlimited, Inc.

WHITEBARK INSTITUTE

June 25, 2026

Wildlife Conservation Board
Charlton Chuck" Bonham, WCB Chairman
Dr. Jennifer Norris, WCB Executive Director
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

re: JMT Wilderness Conservancy Reds Meadow Valley Restoration Project—
2026 WCB Implementation Grant Application

On behalf of Whitebark Institute, I am writing in support of JMT Wilderness Conservancy (JMT Wild)'s Reds Meadow Valley Restoration Project proposal to the Wildlife Conservation Board. This grant will fund restoration of the meadow and riparian ecosystems along six miles of the Middle Fork of the San Joaquin River adjacent to the John Muir Trail (JMT). Situated in Reds Meadow Valley (RMV), it is a prime recreational area and an important portal for the JMT.

More than a century of impacts, including road and recreational development, natural resource mining and exploitation, grazing, the dislocation of indigenous people, and decades of increasing visitor use, have significantly damaged RMV ecosystems. These places now require intervention and active restoration to revitalize and assure their long-term health.

JMT Wild's project will employ Low-Tech Process-Based Restoration (LTPBR) techniques to restore sensitive meadows and riparian areas within RMV. In addition to internal and peripheral restoration, six public campgrounds will also be reorganized to shift campsites to terrain which is better equipped to sustain recreation within this sensitive area.

High elevation meadows and riparian corridors are especially important, as they retain water and sustain year-round flows to California s great rivers, improve water quality, store carbon, and support biodiversity. As an active partner in restoration and resilience efforts throughout the Eastern Sierra, Whitebark Institute supports restoration of essential habitat and ecosystems in the region including JMT Wild's proposed Reds Meadow Valley Restoration Project.

Sincerely,

Laura Beardsley
Executive Director

Wildlife Conservation Board

June 16, 2026

Charlton “Chuck” Bonham, WCB Chairman
Dr. Jennifer Norris, WCB Executive Director
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

re: JMT Wilderness Conservancy Reds Meadow Valley Restoration Project—
2026 WCB Implementation Grant Application

On behalf of the Friends of the Inyo, I am writing in support of the above-referenced Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) grant application submitted by the JMT Wilderness Conservancy (JMT Wild) and urge your approval. Friends of the Inyo is a grassroots non-profit organization based in Bishop, California. Our mission is to protect and care for the land and water of the Eastern Sierra. Over our nearly 40-year history, we have actively engaged with land and water management agencies in the Eastern Sierra as well as state and federal policies concerning the protection and stewardship of local wildlife and their habitats. This grant will fund restoration of the meadow eco-systems and riparian corridor along 6 miles of the Middle Fork of the San Joaquin River adjacent to the John Muir Trail (JMT), squarely in our working area. The area is in Reds Meadow Valley (RMV) west of the Town of Mammoth Lakes and is a prime recreational access point for the Sierra Nevada.

RMV is an important portal to the JMT and the high Sierra Nevada. More than a century of impacts have damaged the eco-systems there, including road and recreational development, natural resource mining and exploitation, grazing of cattle, sheep and pack stock, the dislocation of indigenous cultures who lived and stewarded the environments here, and now decades of increasing visitor use and recreational impacts. Its complex and critical ecosystems now require intervention and active restoration to revitalize and assure their long-term health.

We understand that the project will employ Low-Tech Process-Based Restoration (LTPBR) techniques to focus on restoring the important and sensitive meadows and riparian areas within RMV. In addition to internal and peripheral restoration, its 6 public campgrounds will also be reorganized to re-locate campsites out of meadows and riparian areas to more durable terrain which is able to sustain recreation within these sensitive environments.

High elevation meadows and riparian terrain such as those within RMV are especially important, as they retain water and sustain year-round flows to California’s great rivers, improve water quality, store carbon, and are biodiversity hotspots. Restored wet meadows also serve as natural firebreaks and support overall forest health. This is a project that should be prioritized and funded.

Friends of the Inyo strongly supports this kind of work in our region, and respectfully asks for your approval of the WCB Implementation Grant application submitted by JMT Wilderness Conservancy. In order to protect and restore ecosystems, recreation sites must be revitalized and redesigned with the health of the

ecosystem and landscape in mind, while looking towards the future of visitation in the area and the Eastern Sierra's tourism economy.

Respectfully Submitted,

FRIENDS OF THE INYO



By

Wendy Schneider

Executive Director

MLTPA
MAMMOTH LAKES TRAILS · PUBLIC ACCESS

June 22, 2026

Wildlife Conservation Board
Charlton "Chuck" Bonham, WCB Chairman
Dr. Jennifer Norris, WCB Executive Director
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

Re: JMT Wilderness Conservancy Reds Meadow Valley Restoration Project—*2026 WCB Implementation Grant Application*

To Whom it May Concern:

On behalf of MLTPA – the Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access Foundations - I am writing in support of the above-referenced Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) grant application submitted by the JMT Wilderness Conservancy (JMT Wild) and urge your approval. This grant will fund restoration of the meadow ecosystems and riparian corridor along 6 miles of the Middle Fork of the San Joaquin River adjacent to the John Muir Trail (JMT). The area is in Reds Meadow Valley (RMV), west of the Town of Mammoth Lakes, and is a prime recreational access point to the Sierra Nevada.

RMV is an important portal to the JMT and the High Sierra Nevada. More than a century of impacts have damaged the ecosystems there, including road and recreational development, natural resource mining and exploitation, grazing of cattle, sheep, and pack stock, the dislocation of indigenous cultures who lived and stewarded the environments, and now decades of increasing visitor use and recreational impacts. Its complex and critical ecosystems now require intervention and active restoration to revitalize and assure their long-term health.

We understand that the project will employ Low-Tech Process-Based Restoration (LTPBR) techniques to restore the important and sensitive meadows and riparian areas within RMV. In addition to internal and peripheral restoration, its 6 public campgrounds will also be reorganized to relocate campsites from meadows and riparian areas to more durable terrain that can sustain recreation in these sensitive environments.

High elevation meadows and riparian terrain, such as those within RMV, are especially important, as they retain water and sustain year-round flows to California's great rivers, improve water quality, store carbon, and are biodiversity hotspots. Restored wet meadows also serve as natural firebreaks and support overall forest health. This is a project should be prioritized and funded.

We strongly support these restoration projects and respectfully request your approval of the WCB Implementation Grant application submitted by JMT Wilderness Conservancy.

Best -

John Wentworth
President / CEO

PO Box 100 PMB 432 Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546-0100
(760) 934-3154 [p] (866) 760-0285 [f] www.mltpa.org

31. Revision to Delegation of Authority Policy for Grant Augmentation Amendments

This proposal is to consider a revision to the policy delegating authority to the Executive Director of the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) to execute amendments to existing Grant Agreements for certain budget augmentations.

Background
Under the policy approved by the Board at the February 2024 Board meeting, the Executive Director currently has delegated authority to:

- Approve augmentation requests up to $300,000,
- Authorize a yearly augmentation fund of $1 million to be set aside for this use,
- Excluded from the delegation are projects that include herbicide use,
- The delegation requires an annual accounting of projects authorized under the delegation, and
- Requires a request for Board approval for additional augmentation funding to be set aside once the original yearly augmentation fund has been depleted.

The reason for the policy is that many projects inadvertently exceed the approved grant budget due to rising labor and materials costs, or other unforeseen circumstances. This policy allows small augmentation requests to be approved more quickly and efficiently using less staff time while allowing the project to continue and not be delayed pending approval at a quarterly Board meeting.

At the August 2026 Board meeting, during a report about the current use of the policy, Board members questioned whether an increase in the approved augmentation limits would be beneficial. Staff were tasked with analyzing augmentation request amounts, identifying reasons for augmentation requests, and recommending any proposed changes to the policy.

Analysis
The analysis shows that the average cost of all 37 augmentations approved since February 2024 was $529,000. Less than half (16 out of 37) were at or under $300,000 and able to be approved by the policy. In addition, the $1 million dollar cap was reached before the end of the year. The main reasons for augmentation requests were increased materials costs, tariffs, required additional studies or permits, and additional irrigation needs due to drought. An increase in the per project augmentation limit to $500,000, with no annual cap, would allow for projects to be augmented more quickly without going to a Board meeting for approval, thus saving time and promoting efficiency.

Recommendation
Based on the above analysis, staff recommends the Board revise the existing augmentation policy to:

- Approve the delegation of augmentation authorization to the Executive Director for requests up to $500,000,
- Remove the yearly augmentation total limit of $1 million,
- Report the augmentations approved under this policy in each quarterly Board Meeting Full Agenda.

32. 2027 Board Meeting Dates

The Board will be asked to approve WCB meeting dates for 2027:

Thursday, February 25, 2027
Thursday, May 27, 2027
Thursday, August 26, 2027
Wednesday, November 17, 2027

33. Public Forum for Items not on the Agenda

Adjourn

ATTACHMENT A – MAP OF November 19, 2026 PROJECTS



ATTACHMENT B – WCB DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

DEFINITIONS

Disadvantaged Community – a community with a median household income less than 80 percent of the statewide average (PRC § 80002[e]).

Severely Disadvantaged Community – a community with a median household income less than 60 percent of the statewide average (PRC § 80002[n]).

Justice Community(ies) – a community within census tracts that have the top 25% of the CalEnviroScreen 4.0 overall score; a community within census tracts designated as severely disadvantaged communities (SDAC) according to the Department of Water Resources' Disadvantaged Communities Mapping tool; or are a California Native American tribe or Native American-led nonprofit organization.

ACRONYMS

Americans with Disabilities Act	ADA
Bureau of Land Management	BLM
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	CDFW
California Department of Finance	DOF
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection	CAL FIRE
California Department of General Services	DGS
California Department of Transportation	Caltrans
California Department of Water Resources	DWR
California Endangered Species Act	CESA
California Environmental Quality Act	CEQA
California Fish and Game Commission	FGC
California Natural Resources Agency	CNRA
Conceptual Area Protection Plan	CAPP
Disadvantaged Community	DAC
Enactment Year	EY
Habitat Conservation Plan	HCP
Land Acquisition Evaluation	LAE
Mitigated Negative Declaration	MND
National Environmental Policy Act	NEPA
National Marine Fisheries Service	NMFS
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration	NOAA
Natural Community Conservation Plan	NCCP
Negative Declaration	ND
Notice of Determination	NOD
Notice of Exemption	NOE
Resource Conservation District	RCD
Resource Conservation Investment Strategy	RCIS
Severely Disadvantaged Community	SDAC
Sierra Nevada Conservancy	SNC
State Coastal Conservancy	SCC

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act	SGMA
Tahoe National Forest	TNF
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	USFWS
U.S. Forest Service	USFS
Wildlife Conservation Board	WCB

ATTACHMENT C – WCB STRATEGIC PLAN TARGETS

GOAL B. PROTECT AND RESTORE BIODIVERSITY

Biodiversity refers to the variety of life on earth from genes to species to ecosystems. Our natural world supports and sustains us, and the plants and animals that power our ecosystems rely on areas with minimal disturbance to survive and thrive. Biodiversity protection is at the core of WCB's mission.

B1. Build, protect, and restore large interconnected landscapes

B1.1 Each year invest in at least five habitat acquisition or restoration projects that help build connected landscapes for fish and wildlife.

B1.2 Each year, invest in at least three wildlife under-or over-crossing projects in locations deemed high priority by both transportation and fish and wildlife agencies.

B1.3 Each year, invest in at least five projects that restore or enhance at wetlands (coastal, valley, or mountain meadows) in support of migratory bird joint venture3 priorities.

B2. Protect and restore sensitive and/or rare habitats and help recover special status species

B2.1 Each year, invest in at least ten projects that benefit sensitive species and advance habitat and natural community goals embodied in SWAP, Habitat Conservation Plans, Natural Community Conservation Plans, Regional Conservation Investment Strategies, or other regional conservation plans.

B2.2 Each year, invest in at least ten projects that will enhance stream flow, riparian habitat, and/or floodplain habitat.

B2.3 Each year, invest in at least three projects that have a primary purpose of conserving or restoring native pollinator habitat.

B3. Return ancestral lands and habitat management to tribes to support biodiversity and ecosystem function

B3.1 By 2030, complete ten ancestral conservation land return transactions.

B3.2 By 2030, support at least four projects that include cultural conservation easements.

B3.3 By 2030, invest in at least five projects that will result in tribal co-management of protected lands.

B3.4 Each year, invest in at least five restoration projects that will incorporate tribal ecological knowledge in coordination with local tribes.

GOAL C. TAKE ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Functioning natural ecosystems are essential to maintain community health and well-being in a changing climate. Intact and restored terrestrial, freshwater, and coastal systems remove and store carbon from the atmosphere, safeguard important resources such as

clean water, and can help protect people and wildlife from the impacts of climate change like megafires, flooding, and extreme heat.

C1. Reduce and remove carbon pollution

C1.1 Each year invest in at least 15 projects that help meet California's Nature-Based Solutions Climate Targets to conserve or restore forests, wetlands, or deserts.

C1.2 Each year, support at least 15 projects that help meet California's Nature-Based Solutions Climate Targets to conserve or restore grasslands, rangelands, or oak woodlands.

C1.3 Invest in at least ten projects that include beneficial fire or other fuel reduction or climate resilience activities (invasive species removal, restoration forestry, native plant restoration) to reduce wildfire risk.

C2. Increase resilience to climate impacts for vulnerable ecosystems and communities

C2.1 Ensure that 75 percent of habitat improvement projects have a primary or secondary purpose of increasing resilience to climate change.

C2.2 Each year, support ten projects that are in areas identified as refugia for vulnerable plant or animal species or represent ecosystems highly resilient to climate change.

C2.3 Invest in ten projects that provide climate benefits for vulnerable people and ecological communities.

GOAL P. EXPAND PUBLIC ACCESS TO NATURE

Access to nature is critical to human health and well-being. People with access to the outdoors experience the health benefits of physical activity, social interaction, reduced stress and decreased exposure to noise, air pollution, and extreme heat. In California and across the country, outdoor access and its many benefits are not equitably distributed or equally welcoming to all communities. California is committed to an Outdoors for All, and WCB supports this initiative by funding wildlife-oriented recreation and related nature-focused education throughout the state.

P1. Promote diverse outdoor experience

P1.1 Each year invest in at least three projects that provide or enhance fishing or hunting access.

P1.2 By 2030, support at least five private land acquisition or restoration projects that include **SHARE** Program Participation.

P1.3 Each year, invest in at least five projects that have a primary purpose of non-consumptive wildlife recreation, such as bird watching or hiking.

P2. Protect and restore natural areas for communities that lack access to nature

P2.1 By 2030, invest in at least ten projects that protect or restore areas that provide public access for disadvantaged or severely disadvantaged1 communities.

P2.2 By 2030, support at least five projects that deliver direct ecological benefits, beyond public access, to disadvantaged or severely disadvantaged communities.

P3. Support accessible and representative education, outreach, and engagement

P3.1 For all projects with a primary purpose of public access, provide educational and interpretive signs that are culturally relevant and available in multiple languages.

P3.2 Each year, for projects with a primary purpose of public access, support at least three that are tribally led and include tribal storytelling or other cultural interpretive information.

GOAL O. IMPROVE ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Partners are the cornerstone of WCB's success. WCB is proud of its reputation for collaborative problem solving to deliver creative and effective projects throughout the state. Since 2019, WCB has worked with over 40 new organizations and will continue to build our network to offer grant opportunities. WCB sponsors and participates in numerous public workshops, conferences, and other convenings. At the same time, WCB ensures transparency through recorded, hybrid Board meetings and regularly posted information on our website.

O1. Create new partnerships and expand engagement

O1.1 Each year, attend or conduct at least two meetings that result in outreach, workshops, and materials to increase visibility of the WCB programs with at least one in a disadvantaged community.

O1.2 Each year, sponsor at least five conferences or workshops throughout the state and distribute outreach materials about WCB programs.

O1.3 Each year, develop five new partnerships to support nature and wildlife connections consistent with WCB programs.

O1.4 Each year, track and share progress toward meeting statewide conservation strategies (30x30, NBS climate targets, etc.) and strategic plan goals.

O1.5 By 2027, update the WCB 75-year assessment—for WCB's 80th anniversary—to highlight program accomplishments, including the acreage of habitat type preserved and restored, partnership metrics, and more.

O2. Ensure program and project success through ongoing monitoring and learning

O2.1 Continue implementation of WCB's compliance monitoring program, with staff monitoring approximately 100 randomly selected projects per year.

O2.2 Implement a pilot effort to evaluate the feasibility and utility of incorporating remote monitoring, reliant upon free, readily available imagery, into WCB's compliance monitoring program as a means of increasing the number of projects evaluated on an annual basis, assessing impacts of significant events (e.g., wildfire, flood), and exploring topics of interest.

O2.3 By 2028, develop an improved approach to coordinated compliance monitoring and sharing of outcomes with partner agencies (e.g., Coastal Conservancy, and CDFW).

O3. Improve grantmaking processes (Cut Green Tape)

O3.1 Develop and share an online project portal that integrates and streamlines paperwork and invoicing from pre-application through project close.

O3.2 Develop and offer a grantee feedback survey to solicit ideas on how to improve processes.

O3.3 By 2030, using results from the grantee feedback survey (D3.2), identify and implement five process improvements to simplify grantmaking.

O3.4 Develop and offer grant writing workshops and/or online videos to increase understanding of and access to WCB grants.