



**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
MEETING AGENDA**

TIME: 12:00 p.m.

DATE: Wednesday, September 15, 2021

Pursuant to Governor Newsom’s Executive Order N-29-20, (March 18, 2020), the Executive Committee meeting will only be conducted via video conferencing and by telephone.

🌀 COMMITTEE MEMBERS 🌀

Natasha Johnson, City of Lake Elsinore – Chair
Jeff Hewitt, County of Riverside, District 5 – Vice Chair
Lesa Sobek, City of Menifee
Jonathan Ingram, City of Murrieta
Kevin Bash, City of Norco
Crystal Ruiz, City of San Jacinto
Kevin Jeffries, County of Riverside, District 1

WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY REGIONAL CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

www.wrc-rca.org

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA

12:00 p.m.

Wednesday, September 15, 2021

Pursuant to Governor Newsom's Executive Order N-29-20, (March 18, 2020), the Executive Committee meeting will only be conducted via video conferencing and by telephone. Please follow the instructions below to join the meeting remotely.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ELECTRONIC PARTICIPATION

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://rctc.zoom.us/j/85981216633>

Call in: +1 669 900 6833

Meeting ID: 859 8121 6633

One tap mobile: +16699006833,,85981216633#

For members of the public wishing to submit comment in connection with the Executive Committee Meeting please email written comments to the Clerk of the Board at lmobley@rctc.org prior to September 14, 2021, at 5:00 p.m., and your comments will be made part of the official record of the proceedings. Members of the public may also make public comments through their telephone or Zoom connection when recognized by the Chair.

In compliance with the Brown Act and Government Code Section 54957.5, agenda materials distributed 72 hours prior to the meeting, which are public records relating to open session agenda items, will be available for inspection by members of the public prior to the meeting on the RCA's website, www.wrc-rca.org.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Government Code Section 54954.2, Executive Order N-29-20, and the Federal Transit Administration Title VI, please contact the Clerk of the Board at (951) 787-7141 if special assistance is needed to participate in a Board meeting, including accessibility and translation services. Assistance is provided free of charge. Notification of at least 48 hours prior to the meeting time will assist staff in assuring reasonable arrangements can be made to provide assistance at the meeting.

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. ROLL CALL**
- 3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

4. **PUBLIC COMMENTS** – *Under the Brown Act, the Board should not take action on or discuss matters raised during public comment portion of the agenda that are not listed on the agenda. The Board Members may refer such matters to staff for factual information or to be placed on the subsequent agenda for consideration.*
5. **ADDITIONS / REVISIONS** – *The Board may add an item to the agenda after making a finding that there is a need to take immediate action on the item and that the item came to the attention of the Board subsequent to the posting of the agenda. An action adding an item to the agenda requires 2/3 vote of the Board. If there are less than 2/3 of the Board Members present, adding an item to the agenda requires a unanimous vote. Added items will be placed for discussion at the end of the agenda.*
6. **CONSENT CALENDAR** – *All matters on the Consent Calendar will be approved in a single motion unless a Board Member(s) requests separate action on specific item(s).*

6A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – AUGUST 18, 2021

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6B. WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY MULTIPLE SPECIES HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN FEE COLLECTION REPORT FOR AUGUST 2021

Page 9

Overview

This item is for the Committee to:

- 1) Receive and file the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) Fee Collection Report for August 2021; and
- 2) Forward to the Board of Directors for final action.

6C. ACQUISITIONS STATUS REPORT

Page 11

Overview

This item is for the Committee to:

- 1) Receive and file the acquisitions status report as of August 31, 2021; and
- 2) Forward to the Board of Directors for final action.

7. JOINT PROJECT REVIEW STATUS REPORT

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Overview

This item is for the Committee to:

- 1) Receive and file the Joint Project Review (JPR) monthly status report as of August 31, 2021; and
- 2) Forward to the Board of Directors for final action.

8. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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Overview

This item is for the Committee to:

- 1) Receive and file an update on state and federal legislation; and
- 2) Forward to the Board of Directors for final action.

9. STATE AND FEDERAL GRANTS UPDATE

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Overview

This item is for the Committee to:

- 1) Receive and file an update on state and federal grants; and
- 2) Forward to the Board of Directors for final action.

10. BOARD OF DIRECTORS / EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Overview

This item provides the opportunity for the Board of Directors and the Executive Director to report on attended meetings/conferences and any other items related to Board activities.

- Stakeholders Committee Update

11. ADJOURNMENT

The next Executive Committee is scheduled to be held on **Wednesday, October 20, 2021**, March Field Conference Room, Third Floor, County Administrative Center, 4080 Lemon Street, Riverside.

AGENDA ITEM 6A

MINUTES

WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY REGIONAL CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Wednesday, August 18, 2021

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Executive Committee was called to order by Chair Natasha Johnson at 12:02 p.m., via Zoom Meeting ID: 854 0573 7808, pursuant to Governor Newsom’s Executive Order N-29-20.

2. ROLL CALL

Members/Alternates Present

Kevin Jeffries
Jeff Hewitt
Natasha Johnson
Lesa Sobek
Jonathan Ingram
Kevin Bash
Crystal Ruiz

Members Absent

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chair Johnson.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no requests to speak from the public.

5. ADDITIONS / REVISIONS

There were no additions or revisions to the agenda.

6. CONSENT CALENDAR – *All matters on the Consent Calendar will be approved in a single motion unless a Board Member(s) requests separate action on specific item(s).*

Board Member Sobek requested Agenda Items 6B and 6D be pulled from the Consent Calendar for further discussion.

M/S/C (Ingram/Sobek) to approve the following Consent Calendar items.

6A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JUNE 16, 2021

6B. WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY MULTIPLE SPECIES HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN FEE COLLECTION REPORTS FOR JUNE AND JULY 2021

Board Member Sobek wanted clarification on the exemptions listed for the City of Temecula and the City of Menifee fees for July. Jennifer Fuller, Financial Information Manager, noted that there was a development agreement dated back to December 17, 2002, before the plan started, that covers the exemptions. The reports are prepared on a cash basis, the cash typically comes in from the month before, so the report isn't reflecting what the City of Menifee collected in July, but rather in June. There are two year-to-date columns on the July report, one for the Fiscal Year that ended June 30, 2021, as collections are still being received, and the other for Fiscal Year ended June 30, 2022.

M/S/C (Sobek/Hewitt) to:

- 1) **Receive and file the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) Fee Collection Reports for June and July 2021; and**
- 2) **Forward to the Board of Directors for final action.**

6C. SINGLE SIGNATURE AUTHORITY REPORT

- 1) Receive and file the Single Signature Authority report for the fourth quarter ended June 30, 2021; and
- 2) Forward to the Board of Directors for final action.

6D. QUARTERLY PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT METRICS REPORT, APRIL-JUNE 2021

Board Member Sobek wanted to bring attention to the achievements of Cheryl Donahue for the social media increases and requested that the social media handles be added to the face agenda.

Chair Johnson noted that the social media handles are not currently on the face agenda, but it would be an easy add.

M/S/C (Sobek/Ingram) to:

- 1) **Receive and file report summarizing the Quarterly Public Engagement Metrics; and**
- 2) **Forward to the Board of Directors for final action.**

7. MSHCP MITIGATION FEE IMPLEMENTATION MANUAL UPDATE

Jennifer Fuller, Financial Administration Manager, provided a presentation on the MSHCP Mitigation Fee Implementation Manual update. The manual was approved in December 2020,

and provides guidance for fee implementation, collection, and remittance. After implementation, member agency staff found an urgent issue with residential additions and renovations prompting staff to recommend an immediate manual update.

In the 2004 Model Ordinance remodels, renovations, and minor additions were exempted from fees. The 2020 Model Ordinance is worded differently in that it only exempts remodels and renovations to the extent that they do not add additional square footage. This results in the same per unit residential fee charge to both existing homeowners adding square footage, no matter how many square feet are added, and new home builders, building an entirely new house.

The proposed update to the manual allows for homes that have previously paid the MSHCP fee no additional fees for an addition to the main home, no matter the square footage added. If the MSHCP fee was not previously paid, staff proposes to treat additions and renovations to a main home like an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU), applying the ADU calculation in accordance with state and government code. The ADU calculation allows for additional square footage of 749 or less to not incur a fee, 750 square feet or more would have a proportional fee based on the square footage of the addition and the size of the home. This change should be updated retroactively back to July 1, 2021, meaning any homeowner who paid a whole unit fee for their addition may be eligible for a partial or full refund.

Board Member Ingram wanted staff to elaborate on what the request for retroactive approval would mean for homeowners who had completed a renovation or addition prior to plan implementation. Ms. Fuller clarified that the retroactive request would only apply to someone who had paid the fee between July 1, 2021, and when this update receives Board approval in September. Board Member Ingram inquired whether this update would be applicable to someone who had an existing residence prior to the inception of the MSHCP, and if a fee would be imposed on them if they were to do a remodel or an addition that added square footage. Ms. Fuller explained that yes, there could be a fee imposed based on the current ordinance, the proposed update would be to limit the amount that could be charged and ensure owners who had already paid the fee, do not pay again.

Chair Johnson noted that this change would not be punitive to those that are already in process but fair to those that were pre-existing.

Board Member Ingram wanted to confirm that an existing structure, built prior to the inception of the MSHCP would be charged a fee for additions. Ms. Fuller clarified that the fee would only be for the addition if it is 750 square feet or greater.

Board Member Sobek wanted to know if there was a fee charged to homeowners in the past for additions, or if this was something new. Ms. Fuller noted that the 2004 Model Ordinance exempted minor additions but did not offer clarity on what minor meant, resulting in member agencies exempting all additions from fees. The 2020 Model Update provided clarification to what additions should be, and this update would further clarify the issue. Board Member Sobek expressed concerns with the addition of a new fee to property owners.

Board Member Ingram is concerned that with the implementation of this, as it adds a burden to the city to make sure the fee is paid and what the fee would be if a homeowner was to exceed 750 square feet. Ms. Fuller stated that the fee would be prorated on the amount of 750 square feet or above to the total of the current house and multiplied by the current density calculation.

Anne Mayer, Executive Director, clarified that the RCA adopted an implementation plan that allowed ADUs of 749 square feet or below to be exempt from fees. The policy that was adopted in the implementation manual would make that same property owner adding a room onto their house, regardless of size, subject to a fee. This update is an attempt to correct something that is currently not fair for property owners.

Board Member Ingram agreed with Board Member Sobek against this new fee and believes that an existing dwelling should be exempt from the fee if it was constructed prior to the MSHCP. He requested an explanation of what would happen if a homeowner were to build an ADU and later add an addition to the main house and whether the fees would apply to the addition. Ms. Mayer noted that if the addition is under 749 square feet, there would not be a fee.

Board Member Hewitt thanked Ms. Mayer for her clarification, and thought this update was a natural response to the new legislation coming out of Sacramento. As it is now difficult to get new homes built, new bills have come out making it easier for property owners to add ADUs, convert garages, or build room additions. Ms. Mayer agreed and noted this update was an attempt to be less burdensome to people who were trying to make relatively small additions to their properties with an ADU or addition.

Board Member Ingram inquired whether the enforcement and implementation of the new policy would be done by member agencies. Ms. Mayer confirmed that it would be, as they are the ones responsible for implementing the fee assessment at the time of permit. Board Member Ingram further inquired if there was a structure built prior to the implementation of the new fee structure, would the property owner be exempt or would a fee be associated with an addition. Ms. Fuller noted that if the MSHCP fee had previously been paid, they would be exempt no matter the size of the addition. However, if the MSHCP fee was not previously paid, and they were to build an ADU above 750 square feet, there would be a fee assessed. Board Member Ingram was troubled by this, as there is a per door cost on development, the square footage of the lot and the dwelling were calculated to determine the fee paid without consideration to any ADU impacting the MSHCP or justification for the additional cost.

Steve DeBaun, legal counsel, noted that the MSHCP fee is a regional fee, and it is not based on disturbance or size of the dwelling on a residential level. Adding a whole new living unit, or an ADU, would also likely add a new family that would have regional impacts, making it similar to building a new single-family home. The Nexus Study Update classified ADUs as a separate new impact and are thereby subject to a fee based on size.

Board Member Sobek made a motion to only move this item forward to the Board for discussion.

Chair Johnson asked the Executive Committee to have their comments ready when the item goes to the Board of Directors, as it would be helpful for the full board to have their perspective.

M/S/C (Sobek/Ingram) to:

1) Forward to the Board of Directors.

8. EXPLORATION OF RCA DIRECT COLLECTION OF LOCAL DEVELOPMENT MITIGATION FEES

Aaron Hake, Interim Regional Conservation Deputy Executive Director, provided a presentation on Direct MSHCP Fee Collection. Board Members have voiced an interest in RCA directly collecting the MSHCP fee, which is imposed by each city and the county. The intent of this agenda item is for the Executive Committee to provide a formal recommendation to the Board on whether staff should invest agency resources into evaluating what it would take for RCA to directly collect fees from developers. The issue of prepayment to avoid a fee increase is a separate matter and is based on the ordinances and policies of each member jurisdiction.

The current fee collection process entails: the city or county determining the fee based on their own ordinances and processes, remitting the fees to RCA within 90 days; RCA records the fees, prepares monthly reports to the Board, and yearly certifies to RCTC that member agencies are participants in the MSHCP program to determine eligibility for Measure A funds; and yearly the RCA obtains an auditor to determine if the fees collected are in accordance with the MSHCP, JPA, and Measure A requirements. If RCA was to become a fee collection agency most of the process would remain the same. The changes would be the cities and county would no longer collect fees and remit them to RCA, and RCA would no longer receive the fees from the city and county. The cities and the county would still be responsible for imposing the fee and ensuring the applicants paid, as RCA would not become responsible for enforcement of payment.

To make this change, getting the new system right is a matter of credibility for the Board, staff, and the organization as a whole. The four points to consider are efficiency, logistics, financial implications, and implementation schedule. If the Board decides to continue down the path of RCA collecting fees, the next steps would be to procure a business consultant to analyze and evaluate options and costs for the Board to consider, and eventually implementation of the new software and financial processes.

Chair Johnson wanted to discuss the issue of prepayments and if the new process is implemented, what the internal audit process would look like. Mr. Hake noted that the issue of prepayment was a hot topic recently, as developers were trying to pay fees ahead of the fee increase. After the Board adopted the Nexus Study Update, RCA communicated to each member agency that accepting of prepayments was up to the jurisdiction. The manner and method of collecting the fees is in each jurisdiction's domain based on their policies and ordinances and the RCA does not have legal authority to override how cities or the county

collects a fee per their own ordinances and processes. If a member agency has decided it won't allow prepayment of fees, RCA is not be able to supersede the decision and collect the fee.

Theresa Trevino, Chief Financial Officer, added that an audit process would still be required to make sure the fees have been calculated correctly at the jurisdiction level. Continuing the discussion with WRCOG about their audit process would also be helpful to define what the new RCA process should be.

Chair Johnson expressed concerned with the timeline, it would be adding a new responsibility, as it was not one of our original priorities. It might be a better approach to finish the priority list first and add this to the next step list to be a better, more efficient agency.

Board Member Sobek agreed with Chair Johnson, while this is a good idea, the timing isn't right. This could be something to look at in a year or 18 months, after the transition to RCTC is complete.

Board Member Ingram noted that the last 6 years of audits performed on the jurisdictions caught less than 3%. While this doesn't need to be on an expedited timeline, it is something that should be done. If everyone was going through one system, and approved applications from the city are put through, it takes the city out of the equation so there shouldn't be as many errors and anomalies.

Board Member Jeffries was opposed to this concept when it came up at WRCOG, at the same time, it is recognized that not all member agencies have the resources or staff to deal with calculations and payments. There is a benefit to starting this, but it should be completely voluntary as to whether a member agency surrenders their authority over to the RCA.

Board Member Ingram stated that no one should surrender their authority, but rather have it structured so the fees could be implemented fairly and correctly to developers who have multi-year permits.

Chair Johnson reiterated an opposition to the timing of this change, as so much time was spent on creating a vision for what was a priority.

Board Member Hewitt noted that when WRCOG first started talking about this, small cities were happy with the change, as they did not always have the staffing to calculate fees. When WRCOG decided to accept the payments, they also started doing the calculations for the jurisdictions. This proposal is not same, as the member agencies will still be responsible for the calculations. The only obvious benefit would be cutting the 90-day lag time between collection and receipt of funds to RCA. The big question is whether the RCA should pay a consultant \$50,000 and hire an extra person for about \$150,000 a year to be able to get the cash in the bank earlier.

Board Member Sobek made a motion to table this discussion for a year from now.

Anne Mayer, Executive Director, thanked the Board for their discussion, as it was helpful. One of the reasons for a consultant, if RCA were to start this process now, is due to the loss of half of the Finance Department with the merger of RCTC and RCA. A new person was hired and is currently training, the fourth and final position should be filled by January 2022. Next year, at this same time there would be staff on board, and RCA would likely be able to reduce the external costs.

Board Member Sobek asked when the transition process would be complete. Ms. Mayer noted the transition would be complete in 2023.

Board Member Sobek revised her motion to ask that this discussion be tabled until the transition phases are complete.

M/S/C (Sobek/Hewitt) to:

- 1) Receive and file a presentation regarding the Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) Local Development Mitigation Fee (LDMF) collection and oversight process;**
- 2) Discuss and provide direction to staff related to an assessment of the potential for RCA to directly collect LDMF on behalf of RCA Member Agencies; and**
- 3) Table this discussion until the completion of the RCA and RCTC transition phases.**

9. ACQUISITIONS STATUS REPORT

Chair Johnson noted that this agenda item came from a suggestion from Board Member Sobek, which was a great idea to help the Board know where RCA was with properties regularly.

Hector Casillas, Right of Way Manager, provided a snapshot of acquisitions RCA was currently pursuing. Between January 1st and July 31st, RCA had closed on 11 escrows. Currently, staff is managing 46 active parcels, of these 21 are grant acquisitions, 11 are from willing sellers, 8 are development HANS, and 6 are non-development HANS.

- 1) Receive and file the acquisitions status report as of July 31, 2021; and**
- 2) Forward to the Board of Directors for final action.**

10. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

David Knudsen, Interim External Affairs Manager, provided an update on state and federal legislative activities. The state legislature returned from a month-long summer recess, with December 10th being the deadline to pass legislation. Legislators will be voting on policy and finalizing budget trailer bills associated with the enacted 2021/22 State Budget. Budget trailer bills providing programmatic allocations authorized in the previous budget bill framework, including the climate resiliency budget package are being closely monitored by staff.

The Senate passed the bi-partisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, a roughly \$1.2 trillion infrastructure package that includes \$550 billion in new spending over the next five years. Although staff was working closely with Senator Feinstein's office to complete the senate version of Representative Calvert's Western Riverside County Wildlife Refuge Bill, it was not finalized in time to be included. Legislative Affairs staff will continue to work with Senator Feinstein's office to complete the Senate Refuge Bill in hopes it will be introduced soon.

Regardless of legislative activities taking place, the Legislative Affairs team continues to work on the broad range of issues related to land acquisition and policy at the state and federal level.

- 1) **Receive and file an update on state and federal legislation; and**
- 2) **Forward to the Board of Directors for final action.**

11. **BOARD OF DIRECTORS / EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORTS**

Chair Johnson reminded Board Members that this is the time in which members could bring up any ideas or comments they may have.

Anne Mayer, Executive Director, thanked the Board Members for their input and feedback on the important policy discussions.

10. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business for consideration by the Executive Committee, Chair Johnson adjourned the meeting at 1:07 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee is scheduled to be held on **Wednesday, September 15, 2021**, March Field Conference Room, Third Floor, County Administrative Center, 4080 Lemon Street, Riverside.

Respectfully submitted,



Lisa Mobley
Administrative Services Manager/
Clerk of the Board

AGENDA ITEM 6B

WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY REGIONAL CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

DATE:	September 15, 2021
TO:	Executive Committee
FROM:	Jennifer Fuller, Financial Administration Manager
THROUGH:	Theresa Trevino, Chief Financial Officer
SUBJECT:	Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan Fee Collection Report for August 2021

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

This item is for the Committee to:

- 1) Receive and file the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) Fee Collection Report for August 2021; and
- 2) Forward to the Board of Directors for final action.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Western Riverside County MSHCP Local Development Mitigation Fee (LDMF) collections provide funding for the acquisition of additional reserve lands and related costs. RCA budgeted \$10.5 million in LDMF collections for FY 2020/21 and \$20 million for FY 2021/22. Other fees are contributed by Member Agencies and other jurisdictions for civic and infrastructure projects. RCA budgeted \$490,000 for such contributions in FY 2020/21 and \$559,000 for FY 2021/22.

Attached is the LDMF Collection and Civic/Infrastructure Contribution report for August 2021, which reflects combined collections to date of \$36,399,550 for FY 2020/21 and \$2,393,689 for FY 2021/22.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact to the receipt and file of this fee collection report.

Attachment: Western Riverside County MSHCP LDMF Collection and Civic/Infrastructure Contribution Report for August 2021

**WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY MSHCP LDMF COLLECTION AND CIVIC/INFRASTRUCTURE CONTRIBUTION REPORT
AUGUST 2021**

Amounts subject to rounding

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT MITIGATION FEE COLLECTIONS									
City/County	Month	REMITTED					EXEMPTIONS & FEE CREDITS		
		Residential Permits	Commercial Industrial Acres	Amount Remitted	Total FY 21 Year-to-Date	Total FY 22 Year-to-Date	Residential Permits	Commercial Industrial Acres	Amount
City of Banning	May Additional-Rcvd Sept June July-Rcvd Sept	202	38.81	\$ 746,457	\$ 1,060,637	\$ -			
City of Beaumont	July	55	0.770	170,651	1,407,592	170,651			
City of Calimesa	July-No Activity			-	2,601,045	-			
City of Canyon Lake	July-No Activity			-	33,510	-			
City of Corona	July-No Activity			-	1,021,822	-			
City of Eastvale	June July-No Activity		4.06	30,903	788,925	-			
City of Hemet	June Additional July	11 10		24,574 29,350	1,980,224	29,350			
City of Jurupa Valley	July-Pending			-	2,199,367	-			
City of Lake Elsinore	July	1	1.44	13,888	267,852	13,888			
City of Menifee	June July-Pending	2,559	80.44	6,267,529	9,240,103	-			
City of Moreno Valley	July	35		114,642	1,278,628	114,642			
City of Murrieta	July-No Activity			-	1,182,148	-			
City of Norco	June July		105.42	801,825 2,935	804,059	2,935			
City of Perris	July-Pending			-	1,553,238	-			
City of Riverside	June July-Pending			132	494,210	-			
City of San Jacinto	July	25	1.03	85,176	599,559	85,176			
City of Temecula	June July-Pending Roripaugh DA ¹	15	6.62	71,802	616,900	-	23		\$ 51,382
City of Wildomar	April May June July-Pending	1 1 2	9.18	2,234 2,234 74,317	190,485	-			
County of Riverside	August	336		773,697	8,677,095	1,631,166			
Total LDMF Collections		3,254	247.78	\$ 9,212,345	\$ 35,997,398	\$ 2,047,809	23	0.00	\$ 51,382

CIVIC AND INFRASTRUCTURE CONTRIBUTIONS				Total FY 21 Year-to-Date	Total FY 22 Year-to-Date
Flood Control and Water Conservation District	Romoland MDP		\$128,408		\$128,408
City of Riverside	Monroe MDP		195,371		195,371
Riverside County Facilities Management	French Valley Library		22,101		22,101
Prior Civic and Infrastructure contributions from Member Agencies				\$402,152	\$0
Total Civic/Infrastructure Contributions			\$ 345,881	\$402,152	\$345,881

TOTAL AUGUST 2021 \$ 9,558,226 \$ 36,399,550 \$ 2,393,689

¹ Roripaugh Development Agreement dated 12/17/02. Project is exempt under Assessment District 161.

AGENDA ITEM 6C

WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY REGIONAL CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

DATE:	September 15, 2021
TO:	Executive Committee
FROM:	Hector Casillas, Right of Way Manager
THROUGH:	Anne Mayer, Executive Director
SUBJECT:	Acquisitions Status Report

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

This item is for the Committee to:

- 1) Receive and file the acquisitions status report as of August 31, 2021; and
- 2) Forward to the Board of Directors for final action.

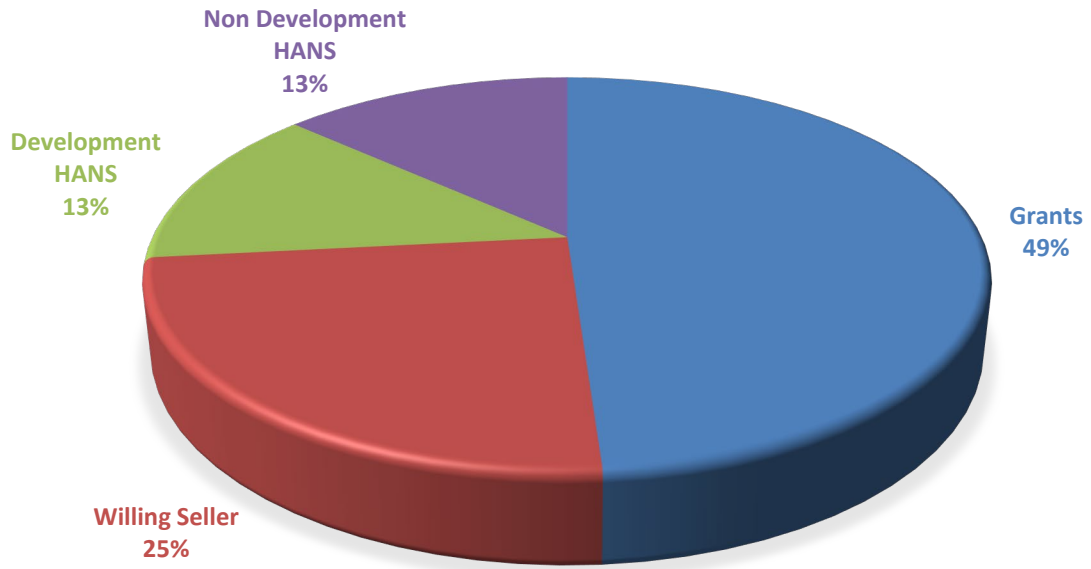
BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Board of Directors requested the Right of Way Department to provide a monthly report of the status of various acquisitions.

Since RCTC became the managing agency for RCA on January 1, 2021, 13 parcels closed escrow and 31 new parcels began the acquisition process. As of August 31, 2021, staff is managing 45 active parcels, including three new acquisition projects during August.

The attachment provides individual property details by type including location, owner representative, and acreage for active parcels as of August 31, 2021. Chart 1 illustrates the active parcels by type of acquisition: grant-funded, development Habitat Acquisition Negotiation Strategy (HANS), non-development HANS, and willing seller.

Chart 1: Active Parcels by Type



FISCAL IMPACT:

This is an information item. There is no fiscal impact.

Attachment: Status of Right of Way Acquisitions as of August 31, 2021

Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority
Status of Acquisitions
As of August 31, 2021

Project Number	Location	Supervisorial District	Owner Representative	Acreage
Grants				
R22171	Hemet	District 3	Dan Hollingsworth	65.18 acres
R22492	Hemet	District 3	N/A	9.74 acres
R22493	Winchester	District 3	N/A	4.36 acres
R22309	Hemet	District 3	Ed Sauls	40.39 acres
R22453	Murrieta	District 1	N/A	4.01 acres
R22494	Murrieta	District 3	N/A	35.08 acres
R22462	Tenaja	District 1	Chris Basilevac	19.90 acres
R22467	Murrieta	District 1	Phil Percival	56.92 acres
R22469	Murrieta	District 1	Chris Basilevac	20.37 acres
R22471	Tenaja	District 1	Chris Basilevac	20.18 acres
R22470	Tenaja	District 1	Chris Basilevac	51.76 acres
R22435	Jurupa Valley	District 2	Glen Williams	25.48 acres
R22434	Jurupa Valley	District 2	Glen Williams	31.70 acres
R22479	Jurupa Valley	District 2	N/A	3.34 acres
R22480	Jurupa Valley	District 2	N/A	3.34 acres
R22481	Jurupa Valley	District 2	N/A	12.55 acres
R22482	Jurupa Valley	District 2	N/A	84.54 acres
R22483	Jurupa Valley	District 2	N/A	94.42 acres
R22484	Jurupa Valley	District 2	N/A	50.34 acres
R22486	Jurupa Valley	District 2	N/A	20 acres
R22487	Jurupa Valley	District 2	N/A	55.3 acres
R22497*	Hemet	District 3	Barry Lall	10.04 acres

Development HANS				
R22424	Temescal Canyon	District 1	Ed Sauls	420.78 acres
R22217	Sage	District 3	N/A	29.41 acres
R22476	Corona	District 1	Garret Sauls	17.23 acres
R22474	Hemet	District 3	Garret Sauls	20.72 acres
R22478	Temecula	District 3	Ron Schreiber	30.07 acres
R22475	Sage	District 3	Garret Sauls	20.4 acres

Non-Development HANS				
R22419	Aguanga	District 3	Garret Sauls	80.00 acres
R22444	Sage	District 3	Phil McElhinney/Garret Sauls	20.20 acres
R22440	Sage	District 3	John Culton/Garret Sauls	322.00 acres
R22407	Nuevo	District 5	Ed Sauls	7.92 acres
R22409	Murrieta	District 3	Ed Sauls	40.00 acres
R22449	Gavilan Hills	District 1	Ed Sauls	197.55 acres

Willing Seller				
R22466	Juniper Flats	District 5	N/A	9.40 acres
R22433	Lake Elsinore	District 1	Glen Williams	239.87 acres
R22472	Temecula	District 3	Garret Sauls	22.88 acres
R22421	Calimesa	District 5	Jason Bennecke	306.93 acres
R22489	Temecula	District 1	Brian Bush	16.37 acres
R22490	Lakeview	District 5	Steve Letterly	85 acres
R22491	Lake Elsinore	District 1	Ed Sauls	129.87 acres
R22495	Corona	District 1	N/A	80.00 acres
R22496*	Murrieta	District 3	Sam Yoo	20.00 acres
R22485	Moreno Valley	District 5	Steve Hobbs	744.67 acres
R22498*	Norco	District 2	N/A	Pending

* denotes a new acquisition project during August 2021

AGENDA ITEM 7

WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY REGIONAL CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

DATE:	September 15, 2021
TO:	Executive Committee
FROM:	Tricia Campbell, Reserve Management and Monitoring Manager
THROUGH:	Aaron Hake, Interim Deputy Executive Director
SUBJECT:	Joint Project Review Status Report

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

This item is for the Committee to:

- 1) Receive and file the Joint Project Review (JPR) monthly status report as of August 31, 2021; and
- 2) Forward to the Board of Directors for final action.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Executive Committee requested that a monthly report of the status of JPRs and other Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) compliance processes be provided. This is the first monthly report, and modifications can be made as is deemed necessary.

The RCA processes Habitat Acquisition Negotiation Strategy (HANS) analyses in the form of JPRs as well as Participating Special Entity (PSE) applications and Criteria Refinements. The included attachment summarizes each type of MSHCP compliance review the RCA has performed since RCTC became the managing agency on January 1, 2021.

Through August 31, 2021, staff has completed 19 JPRs (all Development HANS) with no PSEs or Criteria Refinements completed to date. We are in the process of reviewing 15 JPRs (all Development HANS), two PSE amendments, and one Criteria Refinement.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This is an information item. There is no fiscal impact.

Attachment: RCA MSHCP Compliance Project Processing from January 1 thru August 31, 2021

RCA MSHCP Compliance Project Processing from January 1 thru August 31, 2021

Actively in Process	Completed in 2021
DEVELOPMENT HANS¹	
PUBLIC PROJECTS (Total 3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Lake Elsinore Lake Street ➤ County Waste Pedley Landfill ➤ Murrieta Creek Bridge 	PUBLIC PROJECTS (Total 5) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Perris SJR Trail Project ✓ Temecula Pala Park ✓ RCTC SART Trail Project ✓ County Transportation Gilman Springs Road ✓ French Valley Recycling Center Amendment
PRIVATE PROJECTS (Total 12) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Perris – 1 ➤ Lake Elsinore – 3 ➤ County – 6 ➤ Temecula - 2 	PRIVATE PROJECTS (Total 14) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ County – 11 ✓ Temecula – 1 ✓ Lake Elsinore - 1 ✓ Murrieta - 1
NON-DEVELOPMENT HANS²	
None to date in 2021	None to date in 2021
PARTICIPATING SPECIAL ENTITY	
PRIVATE PROJECTS (Total 2) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Lockheed Martin Site 1 – Potrero Remedial Action Amendment ➤ Lockheed Martin Site 2 – Laborde Remedial Action Amendment 	PRIVATE PROJECTS None to date in 2021
CRITERIA REFINEMENTS³	
PRIVATE PROJECTS (Total 1) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Beaumont Point Specific Plan 	PRIVATE PROJECTS None to date in 2021

¹ A project is proposed on the property

² No project is proposed on the property and these HANS involve only private entities

³ Triggered when a proposed project wants to develop on lands that are described to go into the MSHCP reserve

AGENDA ITEM 8

WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY REGIONAL CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

DATE:	September 15, 2021
TO:	Executive Committee
FROM:	Tyler Madary, Senior Management Analyst, Legislative Affairs
THROUGH:	David Knudsen, Interim External Affairs Director Aaron Hake, Interim Regional Conservation Deputy Executive Director
SUBJECT:	Legislative Update

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

This item is for the Committee to:

- 1) Receive and file an update on state and federal legislation; and
- 2) Forward to the Board of Directors for final action.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

State Update

While the Legislature passed the FY 2021-22 Budget by the constitutionally required deadline of June 15, 2021, this year they forwent their bicameral Budget Conference and instead passed a budget that includes all items in which the Senate and Assembly agree and are continuing negotiations for the remainder of unresolved budget items. The budget includes the following provisions of interest:

- Makes permanent 18 Department of Fish and Wildlife positions and allocates \$3.8 million in one-time General Funds for the Cutting the Green Tape Initiative, with reporting requirements;
- Funds \$65 million in one-time General Funds to the Wildlife Conservation Board for local assistance for drought-related purposes, of which \$12.5 million is allocated for the removal of Ringe Dam in Malibu Creek State Park to preserve the federally endangered southern steelhead trout; and
- Appropriates \$2.75 million in one-time General Funds to the Wildlife Conservation Board for wildlife and fish passage.

The Legislature and Governor continue to negotiate programmatic funding levels within the following climate investments:

- Wildfire Prevention & Resilience: \$258 million from the General Fund, plus additional special funds in 2021-2022, plus \$500 million from the General Fund in 2022-2023;

- Agriculture Budget Plan: \$200 million in General Funds, plus special funds;
- Circular Economy: \$65 million from the General Fund in 2021-2022;
- Water and Drought Resilience: \$730,700,000 in General Funds in 2021-2022;
- Climate Resilience: \$3.7 billion over three years, with \$440 million from the General Fund in 2021-2022; and
- Cap-and-Trade Spending Plan: \$720 million.

Of particular interest to RCA is the allocation of \$3.7 billion in funding over three years for the Climate Resilience Package, in which RCA continues to advocate for funding to the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) for habitat conservation. It is important to note that no budget may obligate the general fund spending of future fiscal years, so the \$3.7 billion figure should be viewed as advisory. The budget allocates \$440 million in funding to the as-yet-unspecified Climate Resilience Package for FY 2021-22, as of the writing of this staff report.

As a result of these one-time investments planned for wildfire prevention and climate resilience made possible by the \$85 billion surplus, legislative leadership determined to table SB 45 (Portantino) and AB 1500 (E. Garcia), the wildfire prevention and climate resilience bond proposals. The RCA supported these bills, and staff strongly advocated for dedicated funding to WCB and Habitat Conservation Plans (HCP), specifically, in these proposals which are now two-year bills. This decision was disappointing to HCP advocates, who understand that ongoing, rather than one-time funding is vital for the success of state and federal conservation goals.

In preparation of the finalized climate resilience budget trailer bill, RCA and the California Habitat Conservation Planning Coalition (CHCPC) reengaged legislators in an effort to ensure dedicated funding to WCB for habitat conservation be allocated. This effort was all the more critical, since the proposed bond measures were tabled. On August 23, 2021, RCA Chair Natasha Johnson sent letters to each member of the western Riverside County legislative delegation, with copies to other legislators who were expected to be involved in the final negotiations of the Climate Resilience Package. Given the uncharacteristically dynamic budget process this year, RCA left its request of \$500 million in funding to the WCB unchanged.

The attached letter to Senator Roth is identical to the others sent to RCA's representatives. Executive Director Anne Mayer sent a letter to Assemblymember Eduardo Garcia, a regional advocate for climate resilience and the author of AB 1500 seeking his support for WCB funding. Additionally, the CHCPC signed on to a broad coalition letter to the Governor, Senate Pro Tem, and Assembly Speaker advocating for a range of conservation investments, including \$500 million for WCB.

As of the writing of this report, the Legislature has not yet finalized the trailer bill and the Legislative Affairs team will continue to monitor the progress of the Climate Resiliency Package, and advocate for programs that will benefit RCA.

Federal Update

Policy committees in the House and Senate have been working for several months on infrastructure reauthorization legislation. In July, the House passed the Invest in America (INVEST) Act which included an amendment to establish the Western Riverside County Wildlife Refuge.

Meanwhile, a bipartisan group of Senators continued to negotiate an infrastructure package directly with President Biden and White House officials and ultimately amended the House-passed INVEST Act to become the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). The IIJA makes broader but smaller investments in transportation, water, and broadband infrastructure. However, the language to establish the Western Riverside County Wildlife Refuge was not included in the amended bill.

The House is expected to take up the IIJA no later than September 27, as well as pass the budget reconciliation resolution, which is being drafted concurrently by the House and Senate to incorporate other elements of President Biden's American Jobs Plan and American Families Plan.

Community Project Funding

The House Appropriations Subcommittee on the Interior ultimately rejected Representative Takano's Community Project Funding (CPF) request made on behalf of RCA, for \$3 million in funding for the Kelvar and Wolfskill Acquisition Project. However, Senators Feinstein and Padilla each submitted a funding request to the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on the Interior for consideration on behalf of RCA.

Senator Padilla submitted RCA's full requested amount of \$4.2 million for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to acquire the Wolfskill property within the MSHCP. Senator Feinstein opted to request \$3 million for the same Wolfskill Acquisition Project.

Staff anticipate that the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on the Interior will begin the mark-up process to draft their appropriations bill to fund Department of Interior programs in September. While there are still several more steps for RCA's funding request to be approved, it is unlikely that both Senators' funding requests will be granted. The Legislative Affairs team stands ready to advocate for the Congressionally Directed Spending requests and provide additional information if requested by subcommittee staff.

Wildlife Refuge Bill

The legislative affairs team has provided information to Senator Feinstein's office to ensure bicameral support for establishing a refuge in western Riverside County. An important part of the work underway is ensuring that Senator Feinstein's bill language is consistent with Representative Calvert's Western Riverside Wildlife Refuge bill. While Representative Calvert's

language to establish the Western Riverside Wildlife Refuge was amended out of the INVEST Act, his standalone bill, H.R. 972, continues to advance through the committee process in the House.

The Legislative Affairs team will continue to work with Senator Feinstein's staff throughout the drafting of her bill and also advocate for H.R. 972.

Attachments:

- 1) State and Federal Update Legislative Matrix
- 2) Chair Johnson Letter to Senator Roth
- 3) Executive Director Letter to Assemblymember Eduardo Garcia
- 4) Coalition Letter Supporting Climate Package Funding to Governor, Pro Tem, and Speaker

WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY REGIONAL CONSERVATION AUTHORITY POSITIONS ON STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATION – SEPTEMBER 2021

Legislation/ Author	Description	Bill Status	Position	Date of Board Adoption
SB 45 (Portantino)	Wildfire Prevention, Safe Drinking Water, Drought Preparation, and Flood Protection Bond Act of 2022. This bill would enact the Wildfire Prevention, Safe Drinking Water, Drought Preparation, and Flood Protection Bond Act of 2022, which, if approved by the voters, would authorize the issuance of bonds in the amount of \$5,595,000,000 pursuant to the State General Obligation Bond Law to finance projects for a wildfire prevention, safe drinking water, drought preparation, and flood protection program.	Ordered to inactive file on request of Senator Portantino June 1, 2021	<i>Support, if amended</i> <i>(based on platform)</i>	April 8, 2021
AB 1500 (Garcia)	Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparation, Flood Protection, Extreme Heat Mitigation, and Workforce Development Bond Act of 2022. This bill, which if approved by the voters, would authorize the issuance of bonds in the amount of \$6,955,000,000 pursuant to the State General Obligation Bond Law to finance projects for safe drinking water, wildfire prevention, drought preparation, flood protection, extreme heat mitigation, and workforce development programs.	Re-referred to Assembly Rules Committee May 20, 2021	<i>Support, if amended</i> <i>(based on platform)</i>	March 30, 2021
H.R. 972 (Calvert)	A bill to establish the Western Riverside County Wildlife Refuge. This legislation creates the federal government's framework to meet its obligations under the Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) Implementing agreement.	Ordered Reported by the House Committee on Natural Resources July 14, 2021	<i>Support</i>	April 5, 2021



4080 Lemon St. 3rd Fl. Riverside, CA 92501
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 12008 Riverside, CA 92502-2208
951.787.7141 • wrc-rca.org

August 23, 2021

The Honorable Richard Roth
California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 2080
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Senator Roth:

On behalf of the Western Riverside Regional Conservation Authority (RCA), I am writing to request increased funding to the California Natural Resources Agency's Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB). With an unexpected budget surplus and California leading the national effort to conserve land and protect habitat, now is the time to support programs with a proven record of achieving these goals.

During the May legislative budget discussion, the Senate budget proposal identified \$500 million for WCB for fish and wildlife protection as part of the Climate Resilience Package. RCA supported this level of funding to WCB for inclusion in the proposed wildfire and climate resiliency bonds, AB 1500 Garcia and SB 45 Portantino. Additionally, the California Habitat Conservation Planning Coalition, of which RCA is a member, submitted letters of support to the Governor, Pro Tem, and Speaker for the Senate proposal.

While this proposal and others were not specified in the budget bill, AB 128 (Ting), nor the subsequent budget bill, AB 161 (Ting), the RCA continues to support the inclusion of increased WCB funding in the budget trailer bill that will ultimately address climate resilience. Increased funding to WCB is vital for continued efforts in western Riverside County and across the state to acquire land for habitat protection.

The RCA manages the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) to establish a 500,000-acre habitat reserve to conserve, restore, and enhance habitats to protect 146 species in our region. As one of the nation's largest habitat conservation plans, the MSHCP strengthens the sustainability and quality of life in Western Riverside County by addressing the need to protect the area's natural habitat while improving the region's infrastructure. The WCB is a critical partner for the success of achieving the MSHCP goals.

Including the Senate's proposed \$500 million increase for the WCB will infuse much-needed resources for Habitat Conservation Plans across California, which, like the MSHCP, are actively acquiring land that will be preserved not only for endangered habitats and species but ensures our communities have access to well over two million acres of open space that will be protected for future generations.

The Honorable Richard Roth
August 23, 2021
Page 2

Thank you for considering this request. If you have any questions, please contact Aaron Hake, Interim Regional Conservation Deputy Executive Director at (951) 787-7141.

Sincerely,



Natasha Johnson
Chair

CC: John Donnelly, Executive Director, Wildlife Conservation Board
Senator Henry Stern, Chair, Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Water
Senator Bob Wieckowski, Chair Senate Budget Subcommittee 2
Legislative Delegation Members
California Habitat Conservation Planning Coalition



4080 Lemon St. 3rd Fl. Riverside, CA 92501
 Mailing Address: P.O. Box 12008 Riverside, CA 92502-2208
 951.787.7141 • wrc-rca.org

August 26, 2021

The Honorable Eduardo Garcia
 California State Assembly
 State Capitol, Room 4140
 Sacramento, California 94249-0056

Dear Assemblymember Garcia:

On behalf of the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority (RCA), thank you for taking the time to meet with us and representatives of the California Habitat Conservation Planning Coalition (CHCPC) on March 8, 2021, regarding our request to increase funding to Habitat Conservation Plans (HCP) and Natural Communities Conservation Planning (NCCP) programs through the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) in your proposed bond measure, AB 1500. RCA appreciates your leadership in climate resiliency, as well as your thoughtful engagement regarding how the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) and other HCPs and NCCPs across the state may contribute to the success of Executive Order N-82-20.

Today, RCA requests \$500 million in increased funding to the WCB, as you had advocated for in AB 1500. With an unexpected budget surplus and California leading the national effort to conserve land and protect habitat, now is the time to support programs with a proven record of achieving these goals.

During the May legislative budget discussion, the Senate budget proposal identified \$500 million for WCB for fish and wildlife protection and habitat conservation as part of the Climate Resilience Package. RCA supported this level of funding to WCB for inclusion in the proposed wildfire and climate resiliency bonds. Additionally, the California Habitat Conservation Planning Coalition, of which RCA is a member, submitted letters of support to the Governor, Pro Tem, and Speaker for the Senate proposal.

While this proposal and others were not specified in the budget bill, AB 128 (Ting), nor the subsequent budget bill, AB 161 (Ting), RCA continues to support the inclusion of increased WCB funding in the budget trailer bill that will ultimately address climate resiliency. Increased funding to WCB is vital for continued efforts in Riverside County and across the state to acquire land for habitat protection.

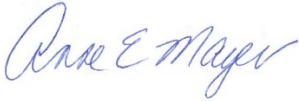
The MSHCP plans for 500,000 acres of habitat reserve to conserve, restore, and enhance habitats to protect 146 species in our region. The MSHCP strengthens the sustainability and quality of life in Riverside County by addressing the need to protect the area's natural habitat while improving the region's infrastructure. As you know, WCB is a critical partner for the success of achieving our plan's goals.

Including the Senate's proposed \$500 million increase for the WCB will help finish the work you started in AB 1500 to infuse much-needed resources for Habitat Conservation Plans across California, which, like the MSHCP, are actively acquiring land that will be preserved not only for endangered habitats and species but will ensure our communities have access to well over two million acres of open space that will be protected for future generations.

The Honorable Eduardo Garcia
August 26, 2021
Page 2

We appreciate your championship of our natural resources with climate resiliency, and your consideration of this request. If you have any questions, please contact Aaron Hake, RCA Interim Regional Conservation Deputy Executive Director at (951) 787-7141.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Anne E. Mayer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Anne" being the most prominent.

Anne Mayer
Executive Director

CC: John Donnelly, Executive Director, Wildlife Conservation Board
Assemblymember Richard Bloom, Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee 3
Speaker Pro Tempore Kevin Mullin
California Habitat Conservation Planning Coalition



CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL CONSERVATION CORPS



Sempervirens Fund



CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICTS



bay area urban forest ecosystem council



August 24, 2021

Governor Gavin Newsom
1303 10th Street, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

Senate President pro Tempore Toni Atkins
State Capitol, Room 205
Sacramento, CA 95814

Speaker Anthony Rendon
State Capitol, Room 219
Sacramento, CA 95814

Senator Skinner, Chair, Budget Committee
Senator Wieckowski, Chair, Budget Sub-Committee on Resources, Environmental Protection,
Energy, and Transportation
State Capitol, Room 5019
Sacramento, CA 95814

Assembly Member Ting, Chair, Budget Committee
Assembly Member Bloom, Chair, Budget Sub-Committee on Resources and Transportation
State Capitol, Room 6026
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: CRITICAL INVESTMENTS IN NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS IN THE
CLIMATE RESILIENCE PACKAGE**

Dear Governor Newsom, Senator Skinner and Assembly Member Ting,

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we strongly support a comprehensive climate resilience budget package that includes funding to support nature-based solutions that further California's commitments to addressing the threats posed by climate change and loss of biodiversity.

We appreciate the decision to allocate \$3.675 billion for activities that promote climate resilience. We believe that such an allocation can accommodate many of the requests to protect the public from extreme heat, promote community resilience, and advance climate resiliency capacity building and planning. However, nature-based solutions are also an important part of the state's efforts to combat the impacts of climate change because they protect and restore the very ecosystems that are the safety net for people and biodiversity. Healthy, functioning ecosystems provide clean water, clean air, and cooler and healthier communities; can better accommodate flooding, sea level rise, and fire; and will halt and reverse the current extinction crisis.

As the latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report has shown us, we are in a race against climate change. We must move quickly to combat climate change and reinforce our ecosystems to make them more resilient to the changes that we are already experiencing.

Therefore, we strongly urge that the final climate resilience package include the following:

- \$500 million for the Wildlife Conservation Board for statewide habitat conservation and protection of California’s fish and wildlife resources in response to changing climate conditions
- \$750 million for the California State Coastal Conservancy for coastal protection, including dam removal and to address sea level rise.
- \$100 million for the Ocean Protection Council for ocean protection
- \$460 million for the state conservancies for regional climate resilience investment
- \$400 million for urban greening/urban forestry to address and mitigate extreme heat, particularly for disadvantaged communities
- \$240 million for urban rivers and parkways
- \$250 million for lakes, rivers, and streams, including restoration of the Salton Sea

In the face of climate change, we must not overlook the critical role that conserved areas play in capturing and storing fresh water, storing carbon, and protecting biodiversity. Executive Order N-82-20 highlights the critical importance of the state’s commitment to “combat the biodiversity and climate crisis,” including the recognition that California’s “long-term vitality is threatened by the loss of biodiversity - the variety and variability of plant and animal life in our State – and the impacts of climate change.” Indeed, this executive order recognized that California’s “natural and working lands – our forests, rangelands, farms, wetlands, coast, deserts, and urban greenspaces – sustain our economy, support our unique biodiversity, contribute to the global food supply, support outdoor heritage and provide clean water and air.”

California has an unprecedented financial opportunity to address the climate and biodiversity crises, enabling action at the scale essential to provide for a safer present and more sustainable future. The funding request above is intended to direct critical investments into agencies with already existing programs that can deliver dollars quickly and efficiently to projects that are ready to move forward now. Our state is facing serious threats to our wellbeing, and we need to deliver funding quickly to projects that will provide direct benefits to communities as quickly as possible.

For these reasons, we strongly urge you to include these investments in protecting our lands and water as part of a final comprehensive budget package that addresses climate change and the impacts we are already experiencing in our communities.

cc: President pro Tempore Toni Atkins
Speaker Anthony Rendon
Governor Gavin Newsom
Resources Secretary Wade Crowfoot

Sincerely,

Jay Ziegler
Director of External Affairs and Policy
The Nature Conservancy

Jeannette Tuitele Lewis
President/ CEO
Big Sur Land Trust

Sabrina Landreth
General Manager
East Bay Regional Park District

Paul Mason
V.P. Policy & Incentives
Pacific Forest Trust

Juan Altamirano
Associate Director of Policy
Audubon California

Pam Flick
California Program Director
Defenders of Wildlife

Jeff Darlington
Executive Director
Placer Land Trust

Doug Campbell
Executive Director
Coastal Ranches Conservancy

Susan Kirks
Chair, Board of Directors
Paula Lane Action Network

Ana Maria Ruiz
General Manager
Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

Belen Bernal

Andrea MacKenzie
General Manager
Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority

Mark Stanley
Executive Officer
Watershed Conservation Authority

Dan Silver
Executive Director
Endangered Habitats League

Rico Mastrodonato
Government Affairs Director
Trust for Public Land

John Hopkins
Director
California Habitat Conservation Planning
Coalition

Nick Jensen
Conservation Program Director
California Native Plant Society

Susan Kirks
President
Madrone Audubon Society

Lisa Levinson
Campaigns Director
In Defense of Animals

Sarah Newkirk
Executive Director
Land Trust of Santa Cruz County

Sam Hodder
President and CEO
Save the Redwoods League

Marissa Lanes

Executive Director
Nature for All

Wendy Butts
President
CA Association of Local Conservation
Corps

Marissa Christiansen
Executive Director
Friends of the Los Angeles River

Mari Galloway
California Program Manager
Wildlands Network

Walter T. Moore
President
Peninsula Open Space Trust

Tori Kjer
Executive Director
Los Angeles Neighborhood Land Trust

Kim Kolpin
Executive Director
Bolsa Chica Land Trust

Geary Hund
Executive Director
Mojave Desert Land Trust

Eamon O'Byrne
Executive Director
Sonoma Land Trust

Doug Johnson
Executive Director
California Invasive Plant Council

Joe Edmiston
Executive Director
Mountains Recreation and Conservation
Authority

Executive Director
Community Nature Connection

Sara Barth
Executive Director
Sempervirens Fund

John Howell
Chief Executive Officer
Arroyos & Foothills Conservancy

Bert Whitaker
Director
Sonoma County Regional Parks

Karen Buhr
Executive Director
California Association of Resource
Conservation Districts

Kim Kolpin
Policy Committee Director
California Council of Land Trusts

Nancy Hughes
Executive Director
California Urban Forests Council

Redgie Collins
Legal and Policy Director
California Trout

Fazier Haney
Executive Director
The Wildlands Conservancy

Grant Davis
General Manager
Sonoma Water

Antony L. Firenzi
Director of Strategic Affairs
Placer County Water Agency

Elizabeth Lanham
Chairperson
Bay Area Urban Forest Ecosystem Council

Sara Davis
Chairperson
Central Coast Regional Urban Forests
Council

Nancy Sappington
Chairperson
Inland Urban Forests Council

Emina Darakjy
Chairperson
Los Angeles/Orange County Regional
Urban Forests Council
Street Tree Seminar

Anne Fenkner
Chairperson
Sacramento Valley Regional Urban Forest
Council

Magen Shaw
Council Representative
San Diego Regional Urban Forests Council

Mona Cummings
Chairperson
San Joaquin Valley Urban Forest Council

Susan Price
Executive Director/ President
Northern California Regional Land Trust

John Svahn
Co-Executive Director
Truckee Donner Land Trust

AGENDA ITEM 9

WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY REGIONAL CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

DATE:	September 15, 2021
TO:	Executive Committee
FROM:	Aaron Hake, Interim Regional Conservation Deputy Executive Director
THROUGH:	Anne Mayer, Executive Director
SUBJECT:	State and Federal Grants Update

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

This item is for the Committee to:

- 1) Receive and file an update on state and federal grants; and
- 2) Forward to the Board of Directors for final action.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

RCA is actively administering one state and one federal grant to acquire Additional Reserve Lands (ARL) as part of its responsibilities under the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP).

Grant	Amount	Awarding Agency	Expiration
FY 2017 Endangered Species Act Non-Traditional Section 6 Grant Program	\$2 million*	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	11/30/2021
Jurupa Mountains Conservation	\$14.7 million	California Natural Resources Agency	3/1/2022

*Federal portion (the State provides a 35% match)

Each of the two grants is a simultaneous opportunity and challenge. RCA staff has prioritized successful completion of each grant before the expiration date. These grants come with specific requirements, approval processes, and timelines. Success requires coordination with state and federal agencies, property owners, appraisers, and all functions within RCA. Doing so increases the likelihood of ultimate success of the MSHCP.

This staff report is an update to the Executive Committee on the status of both grants as well as efforts to prepare for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Section 6 notice of funding availability, which is anticipated at any time. This update respects that some details involve real property negotiations that are the subject of previous and future Closed Session items for the RCA Board.

Jurupa Mountains Conservation

Proceeding from a list of 31 property ownerships and a total of 70 parcels that are eligible for acquisition by RCA in the Jurupa Mountains area, RCA staff and consultants reinstituted outreach to property owners in January 2021. After several outreach attempts, a majority of ownerships were either not interested or did not respond to contact letters mailed or voicemails. However, five property ownerships in the Jurupa Mountains area have expressed an interest in selling their property to RCA. Additionally, the Jurupa Area Recreation & Park District (JARPD) is interested in selling two of its parcels to RCA. Appraisals for the JARPD and the five private property ownerships are underway.

In the meantime, RCA is preparing to close escrow in September 2021 on two properties in the Jurupa Mountains that were previously approved for purchase by the RCA Board in October 2020. These two acquisitions account for 57 acres and will expend \$320,000 of grant funds. They will be the first two properties to close under the Jurupa Mountains Conservation grant.

While staff strives to complete as many acquisitions in the Jurupa Mountains area as possible prior to the expiration of the grant funds on March 1, 2022, limited interest from property owners makes it nearly certain that RCA will be unable to expend all of the grant funds. Even if all eligible ownerships were to sell their properties to RCA, fair market property values on the Jurupa Mountain are such that all \$14.7 million could not be expended.

The Legislative Affairs team continues to advocate for extension of the grant expiration date as well as for the expansion of the eligible acquisition boundary beyond the Jurupa Mountains area to ensure that all grant funds secured by Assemblymember Cervantes in 2019 are fully expended for conservation within the MSHCP region.

Executive Director Anne Mayer, Interim Regional Conservation Deputy Executive Director Aaron Hake, and the Legislative Affairs team met with Assemblymember Cervantes on May 18, 2021, to ask that she insert an extension of the deadline and an expansion of the eligible geography for acquisition into the FY 2021-22 State Budget. On June 22, 2021, the Legislative Affairs team was informed that Assemblymember Cervantes expressed openness to exploring options, subject to input from the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA), who administers the grant.

Accordingly, RCA staff met with the CNRA Grants Administrator on August 11, 2021, and received confirmation that RCA may initiate an amendment to the grant agreement to extend the grant performance period to June 30, 2023. Staff also learned that CNRA has an administrative process to consider the expansion of grant acquisition boundaries. Such an expansion of the grant boundaries requires a written request from Assemblymember Cervantes to CNRA. The Legislative Affairs team has requested that Assemblymember Cervantes take this step to assist RCA in fully expending the \$14.7 million for conservation in the MSHCP area. Staff is awaiting a response from the Assemblymember's office as of the writing of this staff report. Staff will keep the Board apprised of progress.

Extension and Completion of FY 2017 Section 6 Grant

In May 2021, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) approved a six-month extension of RCA's FY 2017 Section 6 grant. This six-month extension is enabling RCA to collaborate with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) to complete the acquisition of five properties which will expend nearly all the grant funds. The FY 2017 grant focuses on properties in southwest Riverside County that are important for mountain lion movement in the Santa Ana Mountains.

Two of the properties were approved at the August 26, 2021, Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) meeting and three properties are scheduled for a vote by the WCB at its November meeting. Achieving these approvals required extensive collaboration with WCB and Department of General Services (DGS). As RCA encountered on a property earlier this year for the FY 2019 Section 6 grant, one of the appraisals for an FY 2017 grant property was rejected by DGS. Fortunately, staff from all agencies involved were able to reach resolution in time to keep that property on-track for the WCB meeting in November. RCA will continue to engage with WCB and DGS on the appraisal review and approval process to successfully perform on federal grants.

Staff is grateful to TNC, WCB, DGS, and the appraisers who have worked diligently to make the FY 2017 Section 6 grant a success.

Preparation For FY 2022 Section 6 Grant

Based on recent experiences with our FY 2017 and FY 2019 Section 6 grants, staff developed a proactive strategy in June 2021 to identify candidate properties for acquisition for the upcoming FY 2022 Section 6 grant solicitation. The Reserve Management and Monitoring team, in consultation with state and federal wildlife agencies, identified biologically important areas to the MSHCP that would compete well for limited grant funds. RCA promptly began outreach to property owners in those areas and was successful in identifying seven potential properties for RCA's FY 2022 federal grant application. Six of the seven properties are currently in the appraisal stage. To increase likelihood of ultimately getting these appraisals approved by DGS and through WCB, RCA procured the services of an experienced appraiser with a successful track record of DGS approvals. Staff will begin preparing an application for funding as soon as information is available from USFWS.

Continuous Improvement

Staff continues to identify opportunities for improvement of the grant process internally and with RCA's state and federal partners. Conversations on potential improvements with state and federal agency staff, appraisers under contract with RCA, and fellow Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs) continue in the background simultaneous to our efforts to perform on current grants.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The fiscal impact of these grant funds has already been accounted for in the adopted RCA FY 2022 Budget.