

June 5, 2003

To: Coastal Commissioners

From: Mike Reilly, Chair, California Coastal Commission
Dick Wayman, Communications Director, Coastal Conservancy

F7

Significant Events at the June 4 Meeting of the State Coastal Conservancy in Oakland

The Coastal Conservancy approved the following:

South Coast

1. A \$365,000 grant to the city of Del Mar for public safety and visitor-serving improvements at the 25th Street entrance to Del Mar City Beach in San Diego County. The city will use the grant to rehabilitate a lifeguard tower, construct restrooms, and replace a ramp that now passes over a seawall. The conservancy's funds are available through Proposition 40, and the city will contribute \$85,000 to the project.
2. A \$250,000 grant to the San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy to prepare a plan to improve wildlife habitat along Escondido Creek in San Diego County. The natural environment of the creek has been severely impaired by human activities, and the plan will identify and develop up to 30 projects to improve water quality and native habitats. Escondido Creek drains to the ocean via San Elijo Lagoon, a 1,000-acre wetlands preserve that is used by a diverse array of wildlife, including over 300 species of birds. The conservancy's funds are available through Proposition 40, and the county and cities of Escondido and Encinitas will contribute services valued at over \$120,000.
3. A \$120,000 grant to the city of San Diego to evaluate the structural integrity of the Ocean Beach Pier. The Ocean Beach Pier is a landmark of the community, and is visited by over half a million people every year. Since the last major repairs were made to the pier in 1988, it has suffered visible damage from winter storms. Studies of its structural integrity are necessary if the pier is to remain open to the public. The conservancy's funds are available through Proposition 40, and the city will contribute \$80,000 to the project.
4. Authorization for the city of San Diego to use \$878,700 of funds awarded by the conservancy in June 2001 to improve the native habitats and recreational opportunities of Chollas Creek. The natural environment of the creek has been significantly degraded by the effects of urban development. Most of the creek's native plants have been replaced by exotic vegetation, and the Regional Water Quality Control Board lists the creek as impaired because of its poor water quality. The conservancy's grant will fund habitat restoration, trail construction, new flood management facilities, and installation of an open-air interpretive center.
5. Expenditures of \$300,000 to prepare an urban waterfront plan for the Los Angeles Harbor area, including a grant of \$225,000 to the Los Angeles Harbor/Watts Economic Development Corporation and direct conservancy expenditures of \$75,000. The Los Angeles Harbor area is one of Southern California's last regional waterfronts that is underdeveloped for visitor-commercial and recreational uses. This project focuses on several local waterfronts, and an

**Coastal Conservancy Status Report to the Coastal Commission
June 2003**

Page 2

important goal of the project is to develop linkages between the waterfront and shorelines areas of the adjacent communities of Wilmington, San Pedro, and Harbor City. The conservancy's funds are available through Proposition 40, and they will be joined with an expected \$250,000 from local sources.

6. A grant of \$400,000 to the Malibu Coastal Land Conservancy to install a bridge over Malibu Creek, replacing a road crossing that is the only barrier to steelhead trout migration on the creek's lower reach. Replacement of the crossing will allow steelhead trout to reach about 2.1 miles of spawning and rearing habitat within Malibu Creek State Park. Malibu Creek is one of the top five streams targeted for steelhead trout recovery in Southern California, where the fish is federally listed as an endangered species. The Coastal Conservancy's funds are available through Proposition 12, and they will be joined with an expected \$150,000 from other sources.

Central Coast

7. A grant of \$275,500 to the city of Santa Barbara to prepare environmental documents, permits, and engineering and construction plans for the first phase of the Arroyo Burro Estuary Restoration Project. This first phase of estuary restoration will involve the removal of invasive non-native plant species, native plant revegetation, removal of in-stream concrete structures, restoration of habitat in the stream channel, stabilization of eroding stream banks, installation of storm drain filters, and development of an interpretive educational trail. The conservancy's funds are available through Proposition 12, and the city will contribute an additional \$135,000.
8. A \$60,000 grant to Santa Barbara County to prepare a master plan to address chronic shoreline erosion at Goleta Beach County Park. The popular beach and park have experienced severe erosion over the past several years, leaving the sandy beach considerably narrowed. A conservancy-funded beach nourishment project planned for this fall will temporarily alleviate the problem, but the severity of damage during the 2002-03 storm season has made clear how vulnerable the upland park facilities are to storm waves. The conservancy's funds are available through Proposition 12, and the county will contribute \$10,000 to the project.
9. A modification to the Beach Erosion Authority for Clean Oceans and Nourishment Goleta Beach Nourishment Project, approved by the Conservancy in April 2002, for sand donation from West Beach, Santa Barbara Harbor, instead of from an offshore borrow site at Goleta Beach.
10. A \$35,000 grant to the city of Morro Bay to develop strategies for retaining commercial fishing operations at a city-owned fishing pier in San Luis Obispo County. The city intends to develop a plan for the pier that will assure the continued viability of its commercial fishing industry. The pier is currently leased to a commercial fish buyer, but the city needs to prepare for a time when the leaseholder may be unwilling or unable to continue it's operation. The conservancy's funds are available through Proposition 40, and they will be matched with a \$35,000 grant from the California Department of Community Development.

Coastal Conservancy Status Report to the Coastal Commission
June 2003

Page 3

11. A grant of \$110,000 to the Elkhorn Slough Foundation for the development and conduct of a workshop and training effort to provide information regarding the resource enhancement programs of the Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve in Monterey County. The foundation will provide training for a variety of regulatory, scientific, and non-government organizations and individuals. The conservancy's funds are available from a grant received from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the state Department of Fish and Game will contribute materials and services valued at \$47,000 to the project.
12. A \$4.5 million grant to the Santa Cruz County Resource Conservation District for the first phase of the Integrated Watershed Restoration Program for Santa Cruz County. This phase of the program will provide for the design and permitting of 75 to 95 restoration projects, watershed monitoring and community outreach, a lagoon management plan, a watershed activity guide for school children, and improved coordination of resource agencies and local watershed partners. Recently completed plans for 13 county watersheds have identified several common problems affecting fisheries, water quality, and the health of streams and wetlands. The conservancy's funds are available through Proposition 40. They will be joined with an expected \$1.5 million from many federal, state, and local sources for the first phase of the program, and considerable additional funds for later phases.

San Francisco Bay Area

13. A \$200,000 grant to the city of Pacifica for the construction of a 7,700-foot segment of the Coastal Trail over the Pedro Point Headlands, linking the city with the Devil's Slide highway right-of-way. The project will complete the last segment of the Coastal Trail in the city, following more than 10 years of effort. With the construction of this trail segment, the city will have completed seven miles of continuous trail along the coast, providing pedestrians, bicyclists, and wheelchair users with a safe alternative to the Highway 1 shoulder. The conservancy's funds are available through Proposition 12, and will add to \$800,000 from Caltrans and \$100,000 from the city.
14. A \$250,000 grant to the San Francisco Foundation Community Initiative Funds to complete planning for the San Francisco Bay Delta and Estuary Center to be located at Pier 45 in San Francisco's Fisherman's Wharf area. The Bay Center will be a visitor learning and research center containing indoor and outdoor exhibitions, laboratories and classrooms, and satellite video-conferencing and web-casting facilities. In November 2000, San Francisco voters gave 73 percent approval for development of the Bay Center at Pier 45. The conservancy's funds are available through Proposition 40. They will support future construction costs estimated at \$32 million and expected from several public and private sources.
15. A \$75,000 grant to Sail San Francisco to coordinate and facilitate visits of tall sailing ships, international maritime training vessels, and other unique craft to California's coastal ports; to assist in development of waterfront festivals that highlight such ships; and to carry out educational projects involving the vessels for students in kindergarten through the 12th grade. Visits by tall ships and other unique or historic vessels to California ports can draw thousands of people to the waterfront and benefit the economies of waterfront areas. Tall ships are also

**Coastal Conservancy Status Report to the Coastal Commission
June 2003**

Page 4

a unique and effective setting for teaching children about the preservation, protection, enhancement, and maintenance of coastal resources. The conservancy's funding will add to \$225,000 from a variety of public and private sources.

16. A \$125,000 grant to the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission to develop public access improvements to the Bay Area Ridge Trail at the Peninsula Watershed property, which contains Crystal Springs Reservoir, in San Mateo County. The improvements will allow opening of this 10-mile section of the Ridge Trail to docent-led access. The Bay Area Ridge Trail Council has been working for more than a decade to obtain public access to this trail. The 23,000-acre property is habitat for a large number of rare and endangered plants and animals, and offers spectacular views of San Francisco Bay and the peninsula. The Bay Area Ridge Trail is a 400-mile trail along the ridges that circle San Francisco Bay. The conservancy's funds are available through Propositions 12 and 40, and they will be matched with a \$187,000 contribution from the SFPUC.
17. Authorization for the Bay Area Ridge Trail Council's use of \$535,000 previously awarded by the Coastal Conservancy to acquire properties along the proposed alignment of the Bay Area Ridge Trail in Santa Clara, Contra Costa, Solano, and Sonoma counties. The properties will secure public access to new sections of the Ridge Trail while protecting wildlife habitat, open space, and scenic areas. The conservancy's funds are available through Proposition 12. The total cost of the acquisitions is expected to be about \$6 million, and additional funding is expected from the state Wildlife Conservation Board, local open space districts, and other sources.
18. Authorization for the Bay Area Ridge Trail Council's use of \$205,000 previously awarded by the Coastal Conservancy to assist in the completion of the Bay Area Ridge Trail at the Coyote Lake Harvey Bear Ranch County Park in Santa Clara County. The Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department will use the funds to build two staging areas and develop about 3.6 miles of multi-use trail, including 2.3 miles of the Ridge Trail primary alignment and 1.3 miles of connecting trails. The conservancy's funds are available through Proposition 12, and the county parks department will contribute an additional \$200,000.
19. A \$2 million grant to the East Bay Regional Park District to purchase approximately 16 acres at the end of Gilman Street in Berkeley for addition to Eastshore State Park on San Francisco Bay. The site, currently used to store horse trailers and zoned for a 50,000-square-foot retail complex, is proposed as a location for recreation and playing fields that many members of the community want to see included in the park. The conservancy's funds are available through Proposition 40, and they will add to \$6.5 million being contributed by the park district for the acquisition.
20. A \$246,250 grant to the East Bay Regional Park District for purchase of a conservation easement on the 36-acre Mount Diablo Gateway property in Contra Costa County. The easement will protect the open space, habitat, and scenic values of the property by preventing its subdivision and residential development. Continued grazing will be allowed, along with recreational uses such as trails, a staging area, and a small equestrian center managed by the city of Walnut Creek. The property is located near Mt. Diablo State Park's Northgate Road

**Coastal Conservancy Status Report to the Coastal Commission
June 2003**

Page 5

kiosk entrance and is adjacent to Diablo Foothills Regional Park. The conservancy's funds are available through Proposition 12, and they will join with \$250,000 from the park district, \$250,000 from the city of Walnut Creek, and \$200,000 from the local conservation organizations Mt. Diablo Gateway Alliance and Save Mount Diablo.

21. Authorization to: (1) accept a grant of \$4,511,400 from the CALFED Bay-Delta Ecosystem Restoration Program for final design, construction, and monitoring of the Napa River Salt Marsh Restoration project; and (2) use \$1,500,000 of the CALFED grant for technical and environmental services associated with the final design, permitting, and monitoring of the project. The Napa River Salt Marsh, which consists of nearly 10,000 acres of wetlands and associated habitats within the former Cargill salt pond complex in the North Bay, was acquired in 1994 and is owned and managed by the state Department of Fish and Game (DFG). The marsh is within the 38,000-acre Napa-Sonoma Marsh Complex, a resource of national importance because of its size and its habitat for migratory waterfowl, shorebirds, and threatened and endangered species. The conservancy and DFG are undertaking the project in cooperation with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.
22. A \$150,000 grant to the National Park Service to acquire the three-acre Whitton property on the east shore of Tomaes Bay in Marin County, and to design a California Coastal Trail link that will connect southward to Millerton Point State Park. Along with expanding recreational opportunities along the bay, the purchase will protect scenic views from Highway 1 and native shoreline vegetation. If not purchased for public use, the property would likely be developed as a residence. The property will be added to the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. The conservancy's funds are available through Proposition 12, and the park service will contribute \$410,000 to the purchase.
23. Authorization to redirect the use of \$1,135,600 previously granted to the Marin County Open Space District to allow the district to reformulate and complete the feasibility study for the Bolinas Lagoon Ecosystem Restoration project, and to conduct engineering and design tasks.

North Coast

24. A grant of \$3.5 million in conservancy funds, plus \$1 million available from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, to the federal Bureau of Land Management to acquire fee and conservation easement interests in approximately 1,800 acres of the Stornetta Brothers Coastal Ranch property near Point Arena in Mendocino County. The acquisition will protect natural resources, prime farmland, and the scenic corridor along Highway 1, while providing for increased public access and continued agricultural use of an historic North Coast farm. The property is adjacent to Manchester State Beach and surrounds the Point Arena lighthouse. BLM will purchase in fee approximately 1,200 acres of coastal bluffs and dunes and habitat along Hathaway Creek, plus an agricultural conservation easement over approximately 600 acres of prime agricultural lowlands and grazing land. The conservancy's funds are available through Proposition 12, and the state Wildlife Conservation Board is expected to contribute \$3,354,000 to the acquisition.

Coastal Conservancy Status Report to the Coastal Commission
June 2003

Page 6

25. A \$100,000 grant to the Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens Corporation to replace a culvert on Digger Creek that is currently a barrier to fish passage. Digger Creek is a small coastal stream that originates east of Highway 1 and flows through the Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens to the Pacific Ocean. Replacement of the culvert will open up 600 feet of upstream habitat for steelhead trout and possibly for coho salmon, which were once found in the stream. The conservancy's funds are available through Proposition 12, and will join with an almost equal contribution from the state Department of Water Resources and \$10,000 worth of services from the botanical gardens.
26. A \$67,250 grant to the Intertribal Sinkyone Wilderness Council to improve salmon and steelhead trout habitat on Wolf Creek in northern Mendocino County. The watersheds of the InterTribal Sinkyone Wilderness and the Sinkyone Wilderness State Park were degraded by decades of commercial timber harvesting that ceased in 1983. The council will repair the damage by planting overhead vegetation to lower water temperatures, deepening pools, and reducing soil erosion throughout the 2.7-mile length of Wolf Creek. The council will also examine the possibility of re-introducing coho salmon, which were last seen in the creek in 1948. The conservancy's funds are available through Proposition 12, and they will be joined by over \$19,000 from the council and California State Parks.
27. A \$600,000 grant to the Yurok Tribe to improve water quality and spawning and rearing habitat for salmon and trout in McGarvey Creek, a tributary of the lower Klamath River. The creek hosts populations of coho and Chinook salmon, steelhead trout, and coastal cutthroat trout. The work will take place on private industrial timberlands in Del Norte County, and will repair damage to the land that occurred decades ago. The conservancy's funds are available through Proposition 12, and they will be joined by over \$129,000 from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, \$100,000 from Simpson Resources Company, and \$50,000 from Caltrans.
28. A \$150,000 grant to Smith River Alliance, Inc. to undertake tasks leading to potential acquisitions of Pacific Shores subdivision lots on the shores of Lake Earl in Del Norte County. The land was subdivided in the 1960s into 1,535 half-acre lots, none of which have been developed. The Coastal Commission never certified the subdivision, it is located in dune and wetland habitats that are subject to flooding, and sewage and water systems were never installed. Smith River Alliance will undertake a systematic program to research the lots and negotiate with their landowners for possible purchase. The alliance estimates that pre-acquisition activities for up to 300 transactions could be accomplished with the conservancy's grant. The 5,500-acre Lake Earl wetland complex supports a great number of rare and endangered animals and plants, and is considered one of the most productive wetlands in the state. The conservancy's funds are available through Proposition 12, and future lot purchases are likely to be funded by the state Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB). In 2002 the conservancy provided the WCB with \$1 million to purchase properties on the lake's eastern shore.

Statewide and General

29. The conservancy adopted an updated Strategic Plan.

**Coastal Conservancy Status Report to the Coastal Commission
June 2003**

Page 7

30. The conservancy received reports on Offers to Dedicate public access and the Southern California Natural Communities Conservation Program.

The next Coastal Conservancy meeting is scheduled for August 14 in Eureka.