

**Sierra County
Board of Supervisors'
Agenda Transmittal &
Record of Proceedings**

MEETING DATE: May 5, 2020	TYPE OF AGENDA ITEM: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Regular <input type="checkbox"/> Timed <input type="checkbox"/> Consent
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DEPARTMENT: Board of Supervisors
APPROVING PARTY: Paul Roen, District No. 3
PHONE NUMBER: 530-289-3295

AGENDA ITEM: Discussion/action on letter from the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) proposing land acquisition adjacent to the Smithneck Creek Wildlife Area.

SUPPORTIVE DOCUMENTS ATTACHED: Memo Resolution Agreement Other

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: See attached letter from the WCB and staff memo

FUNDING SOURCE: N/A

GENERAL FUND IMPACT: No General Fund Impact

OTHER FUND:

AMOUNT: \$0 N/A

ARE ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL REQUIRED?

Yes, -- --
 No

IS THIS ITEM ALLOCATED IN THE BUDGET? Yes No

IS A BUDGET TRANSFER REQUIRED? Yes No

SPACE BELOW FOR CLERK'S USE

<p>BOARD ACTION:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Approved as amended <input type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Adopted as amended <input type="checkbox"/> Denied <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> No Action Taken</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Set public hearing For: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Direction to: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Referred to: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Continued to: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Authorization given to: _____</p>	<p>Resolution 2020- _____ Agreement 2020- _____ Ordinance _____ Vote: Ayes: Noes: Abstain: Absent: <input type="checkbox"/> By Consensus</p>
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COMMENTS:

CLERK TO THE BOARD

DATE

Agenda Item: Discussion and Direction on WCB Letter Proposing Land Acquisition Adjacent to Smithneck Creek Wildlife Area.

Background: The Wildlife Conservation Board is considering a land acquisition of contiguous property to the Smithneck Creek Wildlife Management Area and has solicited comments by letter addressed to the Board of Supervisors. The parcel is currently subject to an annual, verbal grazing agreement between the current owner and adjacent rancher Arnold and Chris Potter. When the land becomes public, the Department of Fish and Game will be managing the land as it does for the balance of the wildlife area. I contacted the Manager for this wildlife area, Biologist Stacy Anderson and asked questions to fully understand the potential uses and restrictions on this newly acquired parcel. My comments for the Board to consider in forwarding a letter to the WCB include the following:

- 1) Confirm that the State will pay annual in-lieu property taxes for this property once it is acquired by the State.
- 2) According to Stacy, there are no immediate plans to allow grazing on the parcel once acquired and it is my opinion that the Board should encourage that grazing continue as a means of vegetation management and the State should not terminate grazing use upon acquisition, rather allow an annual lease to continue the grazing practice.
- 3) According to Stacy, once a decision is made (if it is made) to allow grazing, the State would solicit proposals for a vegetation management lease and individual proposals submitted by ranchers would be ranked and ranking would be based on approach, method, price, etc . There would be no guarantee of who would be awarded a lease. My concern is until the structure for the RFP is developed and issued by the State, it could take years and it is strongly encouraged that the State allow the annual grazing lease to occur under more informal solicitation of proposals while the more involved vegetation management RFP process is being developed. This would ensure that grazing continues and is an accepted practice as part of the acquisition.
- 4) There is a question as to use of ATV's in managing the grazing or vegetation management lease and it is strongly recommended that the Board ask that such uses by the successful rancher in obtaining a lease not be a prohibited method of management.
- 5) The Board should be clear in its letter that it feels that the management direction for the wildlife management area and grazing are very compatible uses and to acquire and then at some later date prohibit grazing would be a disservice to the County's General Plan goals and policies and the Board's full support of sustainable agriculture in Sierra Valley.

Recommendation: Authorize a letter to the WCB containing Board support for the acquisition based on the State's confirmation to payment of annual in-lieu property taxes and based on the comments noted herein and any other that may occur in the discussion before the Board.



GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor
NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD
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MAR 18 2020

SMITHNECK CREEK WILDLIFE AREA, EXPANSION 1 (MELLO)
SIERRA COUNTY
PROJECT ID: 2019043

Dear Board Members:

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), through the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB), is involved in a land acquisition program focused on the long-range protection and enhancement of habitat for fish and wildlife. The CDFW identifies sites considered for acquisition in response to public interest, legislative mandate and departmental goals.

I am writing to advise you that WCB will consider the acquisition of fee title of 976± acres of wildlife habitat located in Sierra County and identified as Assessor Parcel Nos. 016-090-016 and 016-090-019. The proposal is scheduled to be presented at the May 20, 2020, Board meeting. An electronic copy of the preliminary agenda will be available for your review by April 21, 2020 at www.wcb.ca.gov under News and Announcements. A more complete description of each proposal will be contained in the final meeting Agenda, which will be available at www.wcb.ca.gov ten days prior to the Board meeting.

We would also like to inform you that the property involved in this project is encumbered by a Land Conservation Contract under the Williamson Act. The acquisition of the property by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife is for purposes of providing habitat protection and to maintain the property's open space characteristics. The property will become an addition to CDFW's Smithneck Creek Wildlife Area and will remain in its natural and open space condition. If you have any questions about this proposal or need additional information, please feel free to contact me at (916) 445-0137.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'John P. Donnelly'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped 'J' and 'D'.

John P. Donnelly
Executive Director

Enclosure(s)

cc: The Honorable Brian Dahle
The Honorable Megan Dahle
Shelton Douthit, Executive Director

ec: Kevin Thomas, Regional Manager
CDFW, North Central Region (2)