

Exhibit 4: Letters of Support

CALIFORNIA CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

1221 H STREET • SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA • 95814-1910

SERVING THE CATTLE
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PHONE: (916) 444-0845
FAX: (916) 444-2194
www.calcattlemen.org

September 12, 2006

Douglas Bosco, Chair of the Board
State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 11th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

Sent via e-mail: bwilson@scc.ca.gov

Re: "Wildlife-Friendly Pond Restoration" Project

Dear Mr. Bosco;

The California Cattlemen's Association (CCA) wholeheartedly supports the "Wildlife-Friendly Pond Restoration" grant application submitted by the Alameda County Resource Conservation District (RCD). The CCA represents approximately 2,500 California ranchers from throughout the state who are committed to improving and protecting the environment so that they and future generations will be able to continue to be stewards of the land. A number of the ranchers CCA represents live within the Alameda County RCD area. The ranchers in the East Bay have been proactive in implementing voluntarily restoration and enhancements projects on their ranches.

The grant sought by the Alameda County RCD would provide important financial support to an innovative program in which private landowners; local, state, and federal agencies; and environmental organizations are working together to protect listed species. The program funded through the grant will facilitate the repair/restoration of ponds that are often times on the verge of failing and these same ponds provide crucial habitat for a number of at-risk species. In addition, the restoration projects will allow the Alameda County RCD and its partners to take advantage of the Permit Coordination Program and county-wide Safe Harbor Agreement it has developed with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Lastly, the program provides a much-needed model for leveraging NRCS Farm Bill funds to assist with species recovery.

The Alameda County RCD, along with its partner agency the USDA-NRCS, has the expertise and experience necessary to complete this important work. More importantly, the Alameda RCD and the USDA-NRCS have relationships with ranchers who own private lands that are built upon trust, open communication and past experiences. The Coastal Conservancy's support of the program will greatly enhance the restoration of wildlife habitat and promote rangeland conservation in the region. CCA hopes that you also foresee the positive benefits that will be provided by the program and provide the funding requested by Alameda County RCD.

Sincerely,

Tracy Schohr
Director of Industry Affairs

cc: Betsy Wilson, Coastal Conservancy

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September 12, 2006

Douglas Bosco, Chair of the Board
State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 11th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Chairman Bosco:

Re: "Wildlife-Friendly Pond Restoration" Project

It is our understanding that the Conservancy is considering a grant request from the Alameda County Resource Conservation District to enable it to offer incentives to landowners to restore stock ponds in a manner that will further the recovery of the California red-legged frog and the California tiger salamander, both of which are “threatened” species under the federal Endangered Species Act. Environmental Defense is very familiar with this project, because staff from our Sacramento and Oakland offices have worked closely with the District, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to develop a “safe harbor” agreement in connection with the project. We strongly support the District’s request and hope that the Commission will do so as well.

In our view, the proposed project has great potential to enlist private landowners to become willing partners in a cooperative effort to conserve imperiled species. As such, this project is a compelling example of how to bring together disparate interests in support of that goal.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Bean
Co-Director, Center for Conservation Incentives

Cc: Betsy Wilson

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TOM STEINBACH
Greenbelt Alliance

KAREN SWEET
Alameda County Resource Conservation District

TERRI THOMAS
The Presidio Trust

LAURA THOMPSON
San Francisco Bay Trail Project

LLOYD WAGSTAFF
The Nature Conservancy

TIM WIRTH
Trust for Public Land

JOHN WOODBURY
County of Napa

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Bay Area Ridge Trail Council

September 13, 2006

Douglas Bosco, Chairman
State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 11th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Chairman Bosco:

The Bay Area Open Space Council fully supports the "Wildlife-Friendly Pond Restoration" grant application being submitted by the Alameda County Resource Conservation District. This grant would provide needed financial support for an innovative, new program in which private ranchers and agencies are working together to protect listed species. This program:

- Repairs and restores ponds that are crucial habitat for at-risk species.
- Serves as a great model for leveraging NRCS Farm Bill funds to assist with the species recover and demonstrates the importance of voluntary collaboration between private landowners, public agencies and non-profit organizations.
- Allows the Alameda County Resource Conservation District and its partners to take advantage of the Permit Coordination Program and county-wide Safe Harbor Agreement it developed with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The District along with its partner agency, the USDA NRCS, has the expertise and experience necessary to complete this work. This project will help enhance our members' efforts to protect and restore upland habitat and advance land conservation in the region. We strongly encourage your support of this application.

Sincerely,

Bettina K. Ring
Executive Director

cc: Betsy Wilson, Coastal Conservancy

BAY AREA OPEN SPACE COUNCIL

Bettina Ring, Executive Director

171 Crescent Road, San Anselmo, CA 94960 • phone & fax: 415-460-1540
bettina@openspacecouncil.org • www.openspacecouncil.org