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CHAIR, BUDGET
JUDICIARY
LABOR & EMPLOYMENT
NATURAL RESOURCES

Assembly
California Legislature

JOHN LAIRD
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, TWENTY-SEVENTH DISTRICT



STATE CAPITOL
P.O. BOX 942849
SACRAMENTO, CA 94249-0027
(916) 319-2027
FAX (916) 319-2127

DISTRICT OFFICES
SANTA CRUZ COUNTY
701 OCEAN STREET, SUITE 318B
SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060
(831) 425-1503
FAX: (831) 425-2570
MONTEREY AND SANTA CLARA COUNTIES
99 PACIFIC STREET, SUITE 555-D
MONTEREY, CA 93940
(831) 649-2832
(408) 782-0647
FAX: (831) 649-2935

October 24, 2008

Douglas Bosco, Chair
California State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 13th floor
Oakland, CA 94612-2530

Re: Watsonville Slough Acquisitions

Dear Chair Bosco:

I am writing in support of the California State Coastal Conservancy's grant for the purchase of 486 acres in the Watsonville Sloughs by the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County.

For many years, the project parcels have been a top priority for effective conservation of the Sloughs. Their role in a long term strategy to preserve and expand the values of the Sloughs' wetlands--in the face of rising water levels triggered by the pressures of climate change--is underscored by their strategic location between the two units of the Department of Fish and Game's ecological reserve on West Struve and Harkins Sloughs. These lands, together with other publicly owned land in the area, can function on a scale that will support self-sufficient ecological processes with far-reaching benefits.

The Watsonville Sloughs system is recognized as one of the largest and most significant wetland habitats on California's Central Coast. The project area, in the center of the slough system, provides important resting area for migratory waterfowl, and is a significant wintering area for raptors. The overlap of wetlands, marshes and grasslands creates a diverse ecosystem that provides a rich food supply for a variety of aquatic and avian species.

A significant portion of the project lands are in active agricultural cultivation, playing an important role in contributing to the local economy and our country's need for food. The Land Trust's ownership will enable expansion of the wetlands through increased perimeter buffers between agricultural cultivation and existing wetlands; will support restoration of Hanson Slough and associated wetlands; and will provide collateral benefits to the entire Watsonville Sloughs watershed.



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The Land Trust envisions restoration of the project properties, exponentially increasing the benefits of current public and private investment in protection, conservation and restoration of the wetlands of the slough system.

I urge you to make this grant to advance the collaboration of private and public interest in securing a future that is focused on a healthy ecosystem in the sloughs and their wetlands.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John Laird".

JOHN LAIRD, Assemblymember
27th District

JL:ae





County of Santa Cruz

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MARK W. STONE
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October 17, 2008

Douglas Bosco, Chairman
California State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612-2530

RE: WATSONVILLE SLOUGH ACQUISITIONS

Dear Chairman Bosco:

I am writing in support of the California State Coastal Conservancy's grant for the purchase of 486 acres in the Watsonville Sloughs by the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County.

For many years, the project parcels have been a top priority for effective conservation of the Sloughs. Their role in a long term strategy to preserve and expand the values of the Sloughs' wetlands in the face of rising water levels triggered by the pressures of climate change is underscored by their strategic location between the two units of the State of California Department of Fish and Game's ecological reserve on West Struve and Harkins Sloughs. These lands, together with other publicly owned land in the area, can function on a scale that will support self-sufficient ecological processes with far-reaching benefits.

The Watsonville Sloughs system is recognized as one of the largest and most significant wetland habitats on California's Central Coast. The project area, in the center of the slough system, provides important resting area for migratory waterfowl and is a significant wintering area for raptors. The overlap of wetlands, marsh, and grasslands creates a diverse ecosystem that provides a rich food supply for a variety of aquatic and avian species.

A significant portion of the project lands is in active agricultural cultivation, playing a significant role in contributing to the local economy and our country's need for food. The Land Trust's ownership will enable expansion of the wetlands through increased perimeter buffers between agricultural cultivation and existing wetlands, will support restoration of Hanson Slough and associated wetlands, and provide collateral benefits to the entire Watsonville Sloughs watershed.

Exhibit 4: Project Letters

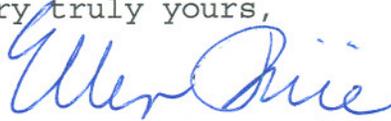
October 17, 2008

Page 2

The Land Trust envisions restoration of the project properties, exponentially increasing the benefits of current public and private investment in protection, conservation, and restoration of the wetlands of the slough system. The Watsonville Slough system is an impaired waterbody, but its coastal wetlands have potential invaluable ecological benefits.

I urge you to make this grant to advance the collaboration of private and public interest in securing a future centered around a healthy ecosystem in the sloughs and their wetlands.

Very truly yours,



ELLEN PIRIE, Supervisor
Second District

EP:ted

4535A2

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OCT 21 2008

COASTAL CONSERVANCY
OAKLAND, CALIF.

Exhibit 4: Project Letters



99 Pacific Street, Suite 200G
Monterey, CA 93940

Tel (831) 333-2044
Fax (831) 333-1736

nature.org/california

October 16, 2008

Douglas Bosco, Chairman
California State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612-2530

Re: Support for Hanson Slough Project - Land Trust of Santa Cruz County

Dear Mr. Bosco:

The Nature Conservancy strongly supports the Hanson Slough Project proposed by the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County. The Land Trust's acquisition of the Cheung and Tai Ranches will provide an exceptional opportunity to advance multiple important and shared conservation goals for the Watsonville Slough watershed. The Nature Conservancy is committed, pending final approval, to supporting this project with \$1.5 million land acquisition grant to the Land Trust.

The Nature Conservancy, in a series of planning documents, has consistently identified Watsonville Slough, including Hanson Slough, as a top priority for biodiversity conservation. The Cheung and Tai parcels are among select Hanson Slough properties identified for protection through acquisition. Land Trust ownership will enable expansion of the wetlands, support restoration of Hanson Slough and associated wetlands, and provide collateral benefits to the entire Watsonville Slough watershed.

The Watsonville Slough system is recognized as one of the largest and most significant wetland habitats on California's Central Coast. The project area, in the center of the slough system, provides important resting area for migratory waterfowl and is a significant wintering area for raptors. The overlap of wetlands, marsh, and grasslands create a rich mosaic of habitats for a significant array of aquatic and avian species. Strategic protection and restoration efforts will yield myriad associated ecological and community health benefits.

The Land Trust of Santa Cruz County and other partner organizations are in the front lines implementing and expanding upon our shared vision for this area. The tremendous energy, support and collaboration among this range of public and private partners speak to the Slough's importance and value.

The Nature Conservancy urges the Coastal Conservancy to strongly support the Hanson Slough Project. This is a remarkable opportunity to advance conservation and collaboration for a future centered around a healthy wetland ecosystem.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Laura Smith".

Laura Smith
Monterey Project Manager

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OCT 20 2008

COASTAL CONSERVANCY
OAKLAND, CALIF.



Watsonville Wetlands Watch

P. O. Box 1239 • Freedom CA 95019

Dedicated to protecting, restoring and appreciating the wetlands of the Pajaro Valley.

October 17, 2008

Douglas Bosco, Chairman
California State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 13th floor
Oakland, CA 94612-2530

Re: Watsonville Slough Acquisitions

Dear Chairman Bosco:

I am writing in support of the California State Coastal Conservancy's grant for the purchase of 486 acres in the Watsonville Sloughs by the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County. The mission of Watsonville Wetlands Watch is to protect, restore and appreciate the freshwater sloughs of the Pajaro Valley. To that end we support this acquisition project undertaken by the Land Trust.

For many years, the project parcels have been a top priority for effective conservation of the Sloughs. Their role in a long term strategy to preserve and expand the values of the Sloughs' wetlands in the face of rising water levels triggered by the pressures of climate change, is underscored by their strategic location between the two units of the State of California Department of Fish and Game's ecological reserve on West Struve and Harkins Sloughs. These lands, together with other publicly owned land in the area, can function on a scale that will support self-sufficient ecological processes with far-reaching benefits.

The Watsonville Sloughs system is recognized as one of the largest and most significant wetland habitats on California's Central Coast. The project area, in the center of the slough system, provides important resting area for migratory waterfowl, and is a significant wintering area for raptors. The overlap of wetlands, marsh, and grasslands create a diverse ecosystem that provides a rich food supply for a variety of aquatic and avian species.

A significant portion of the project lands are in active agricultural cultivation, playing a significant role in contributing to the local economy and our country's need for food. The Land Trust's ownership will enable expansion of the wetlands through increased perimeter buffers between agricultural cultivation and existing wetlands, will support restoration of Hanson Slough and associated wetlands, and provide collateral benefits to the entire Watsonville Sloughs watershed.

The Land Trust envisions restoration of the project properties, exponentially increasing the benefits of current public and private investment in protection, conservation, and restoration of the wetlands of the slough system. The Watsonville Sloughs are an impaired waterbody. Its coastal wetlands have potential invaluable ecological benefits.

We urge you to fund this grant to advance the collaboration of private and public interest in securing a future centered around a healthy ecosystem in the sloughs and their wetlands.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Kris Beall", is written over the typed name.

Kris Beall
Executive Director

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OCT 22 2008

**COASTAL CONSERVANCY
OAKLAND, CALIF.**

San Francisco Estuary Institute



7770 Pardee Lane, 2nd floor
Oakland, California 94621
Office (510) 746.7334
Fax (510) 746.7300

October 20, 2008

Douglas Bosco, Chairman
California State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 13th floor
Oakland, CA 94612-2530

Re: Watsonville Slough Acquisitions

Dear Chairman Bosco:

I am writing in support of the California State Coastal Conservancy's grant for the purchase of 486 acres in the Watsonville Sloughs by the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County.

SFEI has been working with the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County and other stakeholders to move forward on several conservation priorities to restore natural hydrology and protect the threatened habitat of the sloughs system through the Critical Coastal Areas (CCA) Program. Watsonville Sloughs is currently one of five pilot CCAs in the state, which the Coastal Commission and State Water Resources Control Board have deemed priority areas for protection of water quality.

For many years, the project parcels have been a top priority for effective conservation of the Sloughs. Their role in a long term strategy to preserve and expand the values of the Sloughs' wetlands in the face of rising water levels triggered by the pressures of climate change, is underscored by their strategic location between the two units of the State of California Department of Fish and Game's ecological reserve on West Struve and Harkins Sloughs. These lands, together with other publicly owned land in the area, can function on a scale that will support self-sufficient ecological processes with far-reaching benefits.

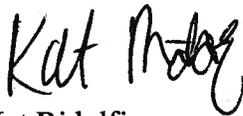
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The Land Trust envisions restoration of the project properties, exponentially increasing the benefits of current public and private investment in protection, conservation, and restoration of the wetlands of the slough system. The Watsonville Sloughs are an impaired waterbody. Its coastal wetlands have potential invaluable ecological benefits.

We strongly support this project, and urge you to make this grant to advance the collaboration of private and public interest in securing a future centered around a healthy ecosystem in the sloughs and their wetlands.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kat Ridolfi". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Kat Ridolfi
San Francisco Estuary Institute



October 22, 2008

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Mark Silberstein

Douglas Bosco, Chairman
California State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 13th floor
Oakland, CA 94612-2530

Re: Watsonville Slough Acquisitions

Dear Chairman Bosco:

I am writing in support of the California State Coastal Conservancy's grant for the purchase of 486 acres in the Watsonville Sloughs by the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County.

For many years, the project parcels have been a top priority for effective conservation of the Sloughs. Their role in a long term strategy to preserve and expand the values of the Sloughs' wetlands in the face of rising water levels triggered by the pressures of climate change, is underscored by their strategic location between the two units of the State of California Department of Fish and Game's ecological reserve on West Struve and Harkins Sloughs. These lands, together with other publicly owned land in the area, can function on a scale that will support self-sufficient ecological processes with far-reaching benefits.

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Office Address
1700 Elkhorn Road
Watsonville
California 95076

Mailing Address
P.O. Box 267
Moss Landing
California 95039

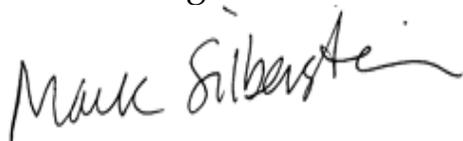
Tel: (831) 728-5939
Fax: (831) 728-7031

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The Land Trust envisions restoration of the project properties, exponentially increasing the benefits of current public and private investment in protection, conservation, and restoration of the wetlands of the slough system. The Watsonville Sloughs are an impaired waterbody. Its coastal wetlands have potential invaluable ecological benefits.

We urge you to make this grant to advance the collaboration of private and public interest in securing a future centered around a healthy ecosystem in the sloughs and their wetlands.

Sincere Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Silberstein". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mark Silberstein
Executive Director



820 Bay Avenue, Suite 128
Capitola, California 95010
tel 831.464.2950 | fax 831.475.3215
www.rcdsantacruz.org

October 22, 2008

Douglas Bosco, Chairman
California State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 13th floor
Oakland, CA 94612-2530

Re: Watsonville Slough Acquisitions

Dear Chairman Bosco:

I am writing to express the Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County's (RCD) support for the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County's grant proposal to the California State Coastal Conservancy for the purchase of 486 acres in the Watsonville Sloughs

The RCD's commitment to the Watsonville Slough system is evidenced by our work on several successful projects including: the Manabe Wetland Restoration with the City of Watsonville, the Watsonville Slough Critical Coastal Area with the San Francisco Estuary Institute, the Last Mile and Tarplant Hill Restorations, with Watsonville Wetlands Watch, the Harkin Slough Grassland Restoration with High Ground Organics, and others

The Watsonville Sloughs system is the most significant wetland habitat in California between Elkhorn Slough and Pescadero Lagoon. The project area, in the center of the slough system, provides important resting area for migratory waterfowl, and is a significant wintering area for raptors. The overlap of wetlands, marsh, and grasslands create a diverse ecosystem that provides a rich food supply for a variety of aquatic and avian species.

For many years, the project parcels have been a top priority for effective conservation of the Sloughs. Their role in a long term strategy to preserve and expand the values of the Sloughs' wetlands in the face of rising water levels triggered by the pressures of climate change, is underscored by their strategic location between the two units of the State of California Department of Fish and Game's ecological reserve on West Struve and Harkins Sloughs. These lands, together with other publicly owned land in the area, can function on a scale that will support self-sufficient ecological processes with long-term and ongoing benefits.

A significant portion of the project lands are in active agricultural cultivation, playing a significant role in contributing to the local economy and our country's need for food. The Land Trust's ownership will result in well established perimeter buffers between agricultural cultivation and existing wetlands that will support the restoration of Hanson Slough and associated wetlands, and provide benefits to the entire Watsonville Sloughs watershed.

The Land Trust envisions restoration of the project properties, exponentially increasing the benefits of current public and private investment in protection, conservation, and restoration of the wetlands of the slough system. The Watsonville Sloughs are an impaired waterbody. Its coastal wetlands have potential invaluable ecological benefits.

We urge you to fund this grant to advance the collaboration of private and public interest in securing a future centered around a healthy ecosystem in the sloughs and their wetlands.

The Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County is a special district organized under state law. The RCD is also a public resource agency and has no enforcement or regulatory functions. The District works closely with the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, through a mutual agreement, in responding to the soil and water management needs of Santa Cruz County land users.

The mission of the Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County is to help people protect, conserve, and restore natural resources through information, education, and technical assistance programs.



820 Bay Avenue, Suite 128
Capitola, California 95010
tel 831.464.2950 | fax 831.475.3215
www.rcdsantacruz.org

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Karen Christensen".

Karen Christensen
Executive Director

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OCT 24 2008

COASTAL CONSERVANCY
OAKLAND, CALIF.