LYNN WOOLSEY
6TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

COMMITTEES:
EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE
RANKING MEMBER, SUBCOMMITTEE ON WORKFORCE PROTECTIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD, ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515–0506

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
2263 RAYBURN BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
TELEPHONE: (202) 225–5161

DISTRICT OFFICES:
1101 COLLEGE AVENUE, SUITE 200
SANTA ROSA, CA 95404
TELEPHONE: (707) 542–7182

1050 NORTHGATE DRIVE, SUITE 354
SAN RAFAEL, CA 94903
TELEPHONE: (415) 507–9554

WEB PAGE AND E-MAIL:
http://www.woolsey.house.gov

March 26, 2012

Chairman Douglas Bosco
California State Coastal Conservancy
Attn. Michael Bowen
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

RE: Russian River Floodplain Restoration: Hanson Windsor Ponds Feasibility Study and Conceptual Design, Sonoma County, CA

Dear Chairman Bosco:

I am writing to offer my support for Endangered Habitats Conservancy's grant application to the Coastal Conservancy for a feasibility study evaluating restoration options for the 358-acre Hanson property along the Middle Reach of the Russian River just west of the town of Windsor.

It is my understanding that funding for this project would be used to conduct a feasibility study to develop a viable, stable and permanent restoration alternative that allows the river to be reintegrated with the gravel ponds. The study would address the issues of flooding, erosion, channel stability, water quality and the biological benefits for salmonids and other listed aquatic and terrestrial species. Reconnecting the river and restoring the floodplain to accommodate high flows during the winter months would provide vital off-channel nursery and refuge habitat for threatened and endangered salmon and other native species. Upland, emergent wetland and riparian habitat would be restored to benefit the suite of plants and animals naturally associated with healthy river systems.

I support Endangered Habitats Conservancy and believe this project will greatly benefit the 6th Congressional District. I urge you to give this application your full and careful consideration. If you have any questions or comments, please contact my grants coordinator, George Haralambopoulos, in my Santa Rosa office at (707) 542-7182.

Sincerely,

Lynn Woolsey

Lynn Woolsey
Member of Congress

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COMMITTEES

NATURAL RESOURCES, CHAIR
SELECT COMMITTEE ON DISABILITIES, CHAIR
SELECT COMMITTEE ON WINE, CHAIR
JOINT COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE, CHAIR

BUDGET
BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE #1
JOINT LEGISLATIVE BUDGET
ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY AND TOXIC MATERIALS
GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION

Assembly
California Legislature

WESLEY CHESBRO
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, FIRST DISTRICT

STATE CAPITOL
P.O. BOX 942849
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(916) 319-2001
FAX (916) 319-2101

DISTRICT OFFICES
710 E. STREET, SUITE 150
EUREKA, CA 95501
(707) 445-7014
FAX (707) 445-6607

50 "D" STREET, SUITE 450
SANTA ROSA, CA 95404
(707) 576-2526
FAX (707) 576-2297

200 SOUTH SCHOOL STREET, SUITE D
UKIAH, CA 95482
(707) 463-5770
FAX (707) 463-5773

March 15, 2012

Chairman Douglas Bosco
California State Coastal Conservancy
Attn. Michael Bowen
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

RE: Russian River Floodplain Restoration: Hanson Windsor Ponds Feasibility Study and Conceptual Design, Sonoma County, CA

Dear Chairman Bosco:

I write this letter in support of the Endangered Habitats Conservancy's grant request for a feasibility study evaluating restoration options for the 358-acre Hanson property along the Middle Reach of the Russian River just west of the town of Windsor.

Historic gravel mining, agricultural development and levees along the Russian River have disconnected the river from its historic floodplain. The floodplains used to provide off-channel nursery habitat for anadromous fish – Chinook, coho and steelhead. These species are federally-listed as threatened and endangered due to loss of habitat and disruption of the hydromorphology of the river system. These formerly diverse and functional floodplains are now isolated from the river by virtue of state-mandated reclamation plans requiring the ponds created by the mining activities remain separated from the river. A new school of thought is emerging among scientists that would have these floodplain areas reintegrated as a functional component of the river system.

EHC and its partners are proposing to conduct a feasibility study to develop a viable, stable and permanent restoration alternative that allows the river to be reintegrated with the gravel ponds. The study will address the issues of flooding, erosion, channel stability, water quality and the biological benefits for salmonids and other listed aquatic and terrestrial species. Reconnecting the river and restoring the floodplain to accommodate high flows during the winter months will provide vital off-channel nursery and refuge habitat for threatened and endangered salmon and other native species. Upland, emergent wetland and riparian habitat will be restored to benefit the suite of plants and animals naturally associated with healthy river systems.

The successful restoration of the Hanson property can serve as a template for other terrace pits along the Russian and other rivers with similar conditions. An upstream property owner is in the process of amending its reclamation plan. The information developed by this project could link synergistically with this upstream project, multiplying the benefits to fish, wildlife, and the river.

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The project will also provide compatible, low impact recreational opportunities including trails for hiking and wildlife observation along with the possibility of a river takeout for kayakers and canoeists. The County's General Plan describes a riverfront trail through the Middle Reach of the Russian River from Healdsburg to Steelhead Beach where much of the property is already in public ownership.

We encourage you to take this opportunity to begin addressing floodplain terrace restoration, restore riverine ecological functions as well as provide public access along this reach of the Russian River.

Respectfully,

WESLEY CHESBRO
Assemblyman, 1st District

cc: Michael Beck, President Endangered Habitats Conservancy

Nancy Schaefer, Land Conservation Services

SONOMA COUNTY REGIONAL PARKS

CARYL HART, Ph.D
DIRECTOR

2300
County Center Drive
Suite 120A
Santa Rosa
CA 95403
Tel: 707 565-2041
Fax: 707 579-8247
www.sonomacountyparks.org

March 5, 2012

Chairman Douglas Bosco
California State Coastal Conservancy
Attn. Michael Bowen
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

RE: Russian River Floodplain Restoration: Hanson Windsor Ponds Feasibility Study and Conceptual Design, Sonoma County, CA

Dear Chairman Bosco:

The Sonoma County Regional Parks Department is submitting this letter in support of the Endangered Habitats Conservancy's grant request for a feasibility study evaluating restoration options for the 358-acre Hanson property along the Middle Reach of the Russian River just west of the town of Windsor.

Historic gravel mining, agricultural development and levees along the Russian River have disconnected the river from its historic floodplain. The floodplains used to provide off-channel nursery habitat for anadromous fish – Chinook, coho and steelhead. These species are federally-listed as threatened and endangered due to loss of habitat and disruption of the hydromorphology of the river system. These formerly diverse and functional floodplains are now isolated from the river by virtue of state-mandated reclamation plans requiring the ponds created by the mining activities remain separated from the river. A new school of thought is emerging among scientists that would have these floodplain areas reintegrated as a functional component of the river system.

EHC and its partners are proposing to conduct a feasibility study to develop a viable, stable and permanent restoration alternative that allows the river to be reintegrated with the gravel ponds. The study will address the issues of flooding, erosion, channel stability, water quality and the biological benefits for salmonids and other listed aquatic and terrestrial species. Reconnecting the river and restoring the floodplain to accommodate high flows during the winter months will provide vital off-channel nursery and refuge habitat for threatened and endangered salmon and other native species. Upland, emergent wetland and riparian habitat will be restored to benefit the suite of plants and animals naturally associated with healthy river systems.

The successful restoration of the Hanson property can serve as a template for other terrace pits along the Russian and other rivers with similar conditions. An upstream property owner is in the process of amending its reclamation plan. The information developed by this project could link synergistically with this upstream project, multiplying the benefits to fish, wildlife, and the river.

The project will also provide compatible, low impact recreational opportunities including trails for hiking and wildlife observation along with the possibility of a river takeout for

kayakers and canoeists. The County's General Plan describes a riverfront trail through the Middle Reach of the Russian River from Healdsburg to Steelhead Beach where much of the property is already in public ownership.

We encourage you to take this opportunity to begin addressing floodplain terrace restoration, restore riverine ecological functions as well as provide public access along this reach of the Russian River.

Sincerely,

Caryl Hart
Director, Sonoma County Regional Parks

SONOMA COUNTY
AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION
AND OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

March 5, 2012

Chairman Douglas Bosco
California State Coastal Conservancy
Attn. Michael Bowen
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

RE: Russian River Floodplain Restoration: Hanson Windsor Ponds Feasibility Study and Conceptual Design, Sonoma County, CA

Dear Chairman Bosco:

The Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District is submitting this letter in support of the Endangered Habitats Conservancy's grant request for a feasibility study evaluating restoration options for the 358-acre Hanson property along the Middle Reach of the Russian River just west of the town of Windsor.

Historic gravel mining, agricultural development and levees along the Russian River have disconnected the river from its historic floodplain. The floodplains used to provide off-channel nursery habitat for anadromous fish – Chinook, coho and steelhead. These species are federally-listed as threatened and endangered due to loss of habitat and disruption of the hydromorphology of the river system. These formerly diverse and functional floodplains are now isolated from the river by virtue of state-mandated reclamation plans requiring the ponds created by the mining activities remain separated from the river. A new school of thought is emerging among scientists that would have these floodplain areas reintegrated as a functional component of the river system.

EHC and its partners are proposing to conduct a feasibility study to develop a viable, stable and permanent restoration alternative that allows the river to be reintegrated with the gravel ponds. The study will address the issues of flooding, erosion, channel stability, water quality and the biological benefits for salmonids and other listed aquatic and terrestrial species. Reconnecting the river and restoring the floodplain to accommodate high flows during the winter months will provide vital off-channel nursery and refuge habitat for threatened and endangered salmon and other native species. Upland, emergent wetland and riparian habitat will be restored to benefit the suite of plants and animals naturally associated with healthy river systems. The project will also define potential recreational opportunities along the Russian River.

We encourage you to take this opportunity to support this very important project.

Sincerely,

William J. Keene
General Manager

747 Mendocino Avenue, Suite 100 • Santa Rosa, California 95401-4850
707.565.7360 • Fax 707.565.7359 • www.sonomaopenspace.org

May 10, 2012

Chairman Douglas Bosco
California State Coastal Conservancy
Attn. Michael Brown
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

RE: Russian River Floodplain Restoration: Hanson Windsor Ponds Feasibility Study and Conceptual Design, Sonoma County, CA

Dear Chairman Bosco,

I am submitting this letter in support of the Endangered Habitats Conservancy's grant request for a feasibility study evaluating restoration options for the 258 acre Hanson property along the Middle Reach of the Russian River just west of the Town of Windsor.

Historic gravel mining, agricultural activities, levees, and other human activities along the Russian River have disconnected the river from its historic floodplain. The floodplains used to provide off-channel nursery habitat for anadromous fish - chinook, coho, and steelhead. These species are federally listed as threatened and endangered due to loss of habitat and disruption of the hydromorphology of the river system. These formerly diverse and functional floodplains are now isolated from the river by virtue of state-mandated reclamation plans requiring the ponds to remain separated from the river. A new school of thought is emerging among scientists that would have these floodplain areas reintegrated as a functional component of the river system.

EHC and its partners are proposing to conduct a feasibility study to develop a viable restoration alternative that allows the river to be reintegrated with the gravel ponds. The study will address the issues of flooding, erosion, channel stability, water quality, and the biological benefits for salmonids and other listed aquatic and terrestrial species. Reconnecting the river and restoring the floodplain to accommodate high flows during the winter months will provide vital off-channel nursery and refuge habitat for threatened and endangered salmon and other native species. Upland, emergent wetland and riparian habitat will be restored to benefit the suite of plantsand animals naturally associated with this river system.

The successful restoration of the Hanson property can serve as a template for other gravel ponds along the Russian and other rivers with similar conditions. An upstream property owner is in the process of amending the reclamation plan for their mined lands. The information developed by

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MAY 14 2012
COASTAL CONSERVANCY
OAKLAND, CALIF.

this project could link synergistically with this upstream project, multiplying the benefits to fish, wildlife, and the river.

The project could also provide compatible, low impact recreational opportunities including trails for hiking and wildlife observation along with the possibility of a river takeout for kayakers and canoeists. The County's General Plan describes a riverfront trail through the Middle Reach of the Russian River from Healdsburg to Steelhead Beach where much of the property is already in public ownership.

As you know, I've had the opportunity to work as a County planner for many years on mining and reclamation issues and other land uses along this stretch of the river. I am offering my experience to the study and eventual project as it proceeds. Please feel free to contact me if I can help at all. My phone is 707-996-5510 and my email is g_carr@sbcglobal.net. Thanks in advance for your support.

Sincerely,

Gregory N Carr

Greg Carr, Glen Ellen

RUSSIAN RIVER WILD STEELHEAD SOCIETY

May 8, 2012

Chairman Douglas Bosco
California State Coastal Conservancy
Attn. Michael Bowen
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

RE: Russian River Floodplain Restoration: Hanson Windsor Ponds Feasibility Study and Conceptual Design, Sonoma County, CA

Dear Chairman Bosco:

The Russian River Wild Steelhead Society is submitting this letter in support of the Endangered Habitats Conservancy's grant request for a feasibility study evaluating restoration options for the 358-acre Hanson property along the Middle Reach of the Russian River just west of the town of Windsor.

Historic gravel mining, agricultural development and levees along the Russian River have disconnected the river from its historic floodplain. The floodplains used to provide off-channel nursery habitat for anadromous fish – Chinook, coho and steelhead. These species are federally-listed as threatened and endangered due to loss of habitat and disruption of the hydromorphology of the river system. These formerly diverse and functional floodplains are now isolated from the river by virtue of state-mandated reclamation plans requiring the ponds created by the mining activities remain separated from the river. A new school of thought is emerging among scientists that would have these floodplain areas reintegrated as a functional component of the river system.

EHC and its partners are proposing to conduct a feasibility study to develop a viable, stable and permanent restoration alternative that allows the river to be reintegrated with the gravel ponds. The study will address the issues of flooding, erosion, channel stability, water quality and the biological benefits for salmonids and other listed aquatic and terrestrial species. Reconnecting the river and restoring the floodplain to accommodate high flows during the winter months will provide vital off-channel nursery and refuge habitat for threatened and endangered salmon and other native species. Upland, emergent wetland and riparian habitat will be restored to benefit the suite of plants and animals naturally associated with healthy river systems.

The successful restoration of the Hanson property can serve as a template for other terrace pits along the Russian and other rivers with similar conditions. An upstream property owner is in the process of amending its reclamation plan. The information developed by this project could link synergistically with this upstream project, multiplying the benefits to fish, wildlife, and the river.

The project will also provide compatible, low impact recreational opportunities including trails for hiking and wildlife observation along with the possibility of a river takeout for kayakers and canoeists. The County's General Plan describes a riverfront trail through the Middle Reach of the Russian River from Healdsburg to Steelhead Beach where much of the property is already in public ownership.

R.R.W.S.S PMB # 211 16129 Main Street Unit B Guerneville , CA. 95446
E-mail: rrwildsteelheadsociety@gmail.com

RUSSIAN RIVER WILD STEELHEAD SOCIETY

We encourage you to take this opportunity to address floodplain terrace restoration, restore riverine ecological functions and provide public access along this reach of the Russian River.

Sincerely,

Robert Torre

Director – Russian River Wild Steelhead Society

R.R.W.S.S PMB # 211 16129 Main Street Unit B Guerneville , CA. 95446
E-mail: rrwildsteelheadsociety@gmail.com

CALIFORNIA
Water Boards

EDMUND G. BROWN JR.
GOVERNOR

MATTHEW RODRIQUEZ
SECRETARY FOR
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

May 14, 2012

RECEIVED
MAY 15 2012
COASTAL CONSERVANCY
OAKLAND, CALIF.

Chairman Douglas Bosco
California State Coastal Conservancy
Attn. Michael Bowen
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Chairman Bosco:

Subject: **Russian River Floodplain Restoration: Hanson Windsor Ponds Feasibility Study and Conceptual Design, Sonoma County, CA**

The North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) is the responsible agency for protection of waters of the State within our region. As such, we review and issue permits for projects or activities that may impact waters in the region.

Regional Water Board staff has been attending meetings with other state and local regulatory agencies and Endangered Habitats Conservancy (EHC) staff, regarding the proposed restoration project on the Hanson property. Regional Water Board staff supports the proposal to restore these off-channel ponds to a system that is reconnected to the Russian River, and EHC's grant request with your agency.

Currently the off-channel ponds provide some habitat; however, by connecting them to the river and conducting extensive habitat restoration, the project would provide much more value to the endangered and threatened salmonids that inhabit the watershed. Additionally, the project will increase the floodplain area, and thus reduce flooding impacts downstream. Connecting the river to these ponds will increase habitat complexity for a majority of the species within the area, and is a far better alternative to the mining reclamation that has traditionally been done and that would require regular maintenance to keep the ponds separate from the river system.

EHC and its partners are proposing to conduct a feasibility study to develop a viable, stable and permanent restoration alternative that allows the river to be reintegrated with the gravel ponds. The study will address the issues of flooding, erosion, channel stability, water quality and the biological benefits for salmonids and other listed aquatic and terrestrial species. Reconnecting the river and restoring the floodplain to accommodate high flows during the winter months will provide vital off-channel nursery

and refuge habitat for threatened and endangered salmon and other native species. Upland, emergent wetland and riparian habitat will be restored to benefit the suite of plants and animals naturally associated with healthy river systems.

The project will also provide compatible, low impact recreational opportunities including trails for hiking and wildlife observation along with the possibility of a river takeout for kayakers and canoeists. The County's General Plan describes a riverfront trail through the Middle Reach of the Russian River from Healdsburg to Steelhead Beach where much of the property is already in public ownership.

There are other gravel ponds within this reach of the Russian River that, if this effort is successful, could also be reclaimed in a similar manner and create additional benefits to the river, rather than the current functionality of the ponds. Beneficial uses of waters of the state would increase through implementation of this proposal. We support projects such as this that increase the quality of our waters and sustain their beneficial uses.

If you have any questions or comments, please call me at (707) 576-2689 or Stephen Bargsten at (707) 576-2653.

Sincerely,

Mark Neely
Senior Engineering Geologist

120514_SKB_HansenPonds_SupportLetter

cc: Messrs. John McKeon and Brian Cluer, NOAA Fisheries, 777 Sonoma Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA 95404
Ms. Nancy Schaefer, Land Conservation Services, 623 Sherree Drive, Martinez, CA 94553