

[RESOLUTION AS REVISED AT MEETING]

COASTAL CONSERVANCY

Staff Recommendation
February 2, 2017

**EEL RIVER ESTUARY AND CENTERVILLE SLOUGH ENHANCEMENT PROJECT:
IMPLEMENTATION**

Project No.: 12-018-03
Project Manager: Michael Bowen

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Consideration and certification of the Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Eel River Estuary and Centerville Slough Enhancement Project; approval of the version of the project identified as Alternative 4 in that report (“the Project”); adoption of findings and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program; and authorization to disburse up to \$950,000 of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service funds to The Wildlands Conservancy for implementation of the Project.”

LOCATION: Centerville Slough, tributary to the Salt River, near Ferndale, Humboldt County (Exhibit 1)

PROGRAM CATEGORY: Coastal Resource Enhancement

EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1: [Project Location Maps and Alternatives](#)

Exhibit 2: [Proposed Actions and Budget](#)

Exhibit 3: [Staff Recommendation April 18, 2013](#)

Exhibit 4: [Final EIR](#)

Exhibit 5: [Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program and Adaptive Management Program.](#)

Exhibit 6: [Project Letters](#)

RESOLUTION AND FINDINGS:

Staff recommends that the State Coastal Conservancy adopt the following resolution pursuant to Sections 31251 – 31270 of the Public Resources Code:

“The State Coastal Conservancy hereby certifies the *Final Environmental Impact Report, Eel River Estuary and Centerville Slough Enhancement Project, January 2017* (Final EIR), approves the version of the Eel River Estuary and Centerville Slough Enhancement Project identified as Alternative 4 in the Final EIR (“the Project”) at Centerville Slough, near Ferndale (Exhibit 1),

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and adopts the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) (Final EIR and MMRP are attached to the accompanying staff recommendation as Exhibits 4 and 5, respectively). The Conservancy further authorizes the disbursement of up to \$950,000.00 (nine hundred fifty thousand dollars) of U.S Fish and Wildlife Service grant funds to The Wildlands Conservancy (TWC) to implement the Project subject to the following conditions:

1. Prior to the disbursement of funds, TWC shall have obtained sufficient matching funds to satisfy the obligations of the federal grant agreement.
2. Prior to the disbursement of funds, TWC shall submit for the review and approval of the Conservancy's Executive Officer: 1) a work program including schedule and budget, and the names of any contractors it intends to use to complete the improvements, 2) a sign plan, and 3) evidence that all necessary permits and approvals have been obtained.
3. Prior to commencing the Project, TWC shall enter into and record an agreement pursuant to Public Resources Code 31116(c) sufficient to protect the public interest in the improvements.
4. In carrying out the Project, TWC shall comply with all applicable mitigation and monitoring measures identified in the Final EIR and comply with all measures that are required by any permit or approval.
5. TWC shall comply with all applicable terms and conditions imposed by any federal or state grant.
6. Within 30 days of board action, the State Coastal Conservancy shall host a meeting with all property owners party to the drainage easement, and their attorneys. The purpose of this meeting shall be to develop a Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) that: a) recognizes the hydrologic interconnectedness of the area; b) recognizes the mutual benefit of continuing to co-manage the area for agricultural production and natural resource enhancement; c) acknowledges the benefit the project can provide to achieve mutual benefit; d) identifies potential modifications to the drainage easement that accommodate the construction of new infrastructure within the project area, and; e) identifies constructive ways to pool risk and responsibility for maintenance, repair and enhancement of this unique project area. No funds shall be released until SCC staff returns to the board to report on the outcome of the required meeting(s)."

Staff further recommends that the Conservancy adopt the following findings:

"Based on the accompanying staff report and attached exhibits, the State Coastal Conservancy hereby finds that:

1. The authorization is consistent with Chapter 6 of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code, regarding enhancement of coastal resources.
2. The Project is consistent with the current Conservancy Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines.
3. The Conservancy has independently reviewed and considered the information contained in the Final EIR pursuant to its responsibilities as the lead agency for the Project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Final EIR was completed in

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compliance with CEQA under the direction and supervision of the Conservancy and reflects the Conservancy's independent judgment and analysis.

4. The Final EIR identifies varying degrees of impacts from the implementation of the Project in several resource categories. With regard to these impacts, as modified by incorporation of the mitigation measures identified in the Final EIR, or through design elements intended to minimize or avoid harmful impacts, the Project was changed to avoid, reduce or mitigate the possible significant environmental effects of the Project as described further in the accompanying staff recommendation.
5. The Wildlands Conservancy is a nonprofit organization existing under section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code, and whose purposes are consistent with Division 21 of the Public Resources Code.”