

1992

State Coastal Conservancy Annual Report 1991-92

State Coastal Conservancy

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State Coastal Conservancy

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Annual Report
1991-92

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1991-92



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California State Coastal
Conservancy.
Annual report.

Pete Wilson
Governor of the State of California

Douglas P. Wheeler
Secretary for Resources

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Public Member

Margaret Azevedo
Public Member

James T. Burroughs
Public Member

Marcus E. Powers
Public Member

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California Coastal Commission

Thomas W. Hayes
Director of Finance

Douglas P. Wheeler
Secretary for Resources

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District 2

Senator Henry Mello
District 17

Assemblywoman Deirdre Alpert
District 75

Assemblyman Jim Costa
District 30

Assemblyman Jack O'Connell
District 35

Alternate Members
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for Douglas P. Wheeler

Steve Kolodney
for Thomas W. Hayes

Jim Burns
for Thomas W. Gwyn

Executive Officer
Peter Grenell

November 1992

TO THE GOVERNOR, MEMBERS OF THE
LEGISLATURE, AND THE PUBLIC:

Fiscal Year 1991-92 was another productive year for the State Coastal Conservancy, thanks in large part to our ability to "make a little go a long way" by leveraging our funds, coordinating private and public efforts, and forging "win-win" solutions to common problems at minimum public cost. Despite reduced funding, the agency completed many projects, continued work on numerous Resourceful California priorities, and heightened our efforts to increase economic and employment benefits to state and regional economies while protecting our coastal resources.

Among last year's notable achievements was the rapid purchase of the 120-acre Franklin Point Dunes property with earmarked Proposition 70 funds for addition to the Año Nuevo State Reserve. The Conservancy has now exhausted its Prop. 70 allocations for San Mateo and Monterey counties. We expect to use the last of our Sonoma Coast allocation and most of our San Luis Obispo County funds in the coming year. The Conservancy also completed the 300-acre Point Cabrillo acquisition by exchanging seven residences, newly built in Fort Bragg for U.S. Coast Guard staff, for the historic 35-acre Light Station on the Mendocino County headland. This exchange once more demonstrated the flexibility that has allowed the Conservancy to seek out innovative solutions to coastal resource issues for the past 16 years.

An example of things to come under increasing funding constraints was the Conservancy's funding of the first phase of a multi-year, joint Conservancy/State Department of Parks and Recreation purchase of a former logging road in Mendocino County,

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thus permanently making available ten miles of beach shoreline to the public. Important expansions of public access to serve metropolitan populations were achieved with the reopening of the reconstructed Huntington Beach and Manhattan Beach piers and completion of eight San Francisco Bay Trail segments. Also notable was the opening of a commercial fishing gear storage facility in Santa Barbara. It is the first of several Conservancy projects to be completed under the Local Marine Fisheries Impact Program.

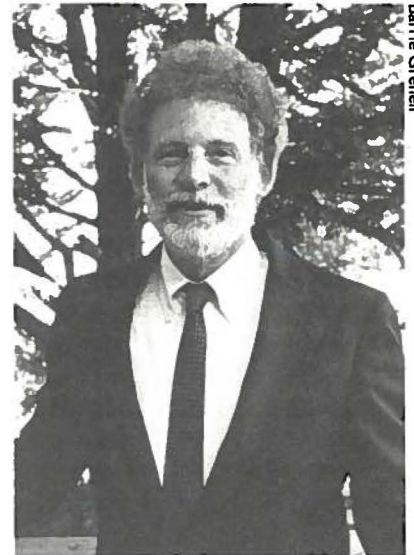
The Conservancy continued work on its Sonoma Baylands project, which will use uncontaminated dredged materials to recreate tidal marshes. This project will demonstrate one way to solve a critical problem for ports that must dispose of dredged materials without damaging marine habitat and water quality.

The Conservancy also made significant progress in its watershed and riparian activities. Conservancy-funded land acquisition and restoration proceeded in the Morro Bay Watershed, and work began on major river corridor plans for the Russian, Petaluma, and Santa Clara rivers. Conservancy funding for planning and technical assistance in such efforts contributes greatly in bringing together diverse environmental, agricultural, business, and government interests to reach mutually acceptable solutions to complex resource management problems, for comparatively little public investment.

In spite of this record of accomplishment, the Coastal Conservancy's future is problematic. No bond act or other funding source for the Conservancy was on the November ballot. The next election when a bond act can be offered to the electorate is June 1994. Without other funding in the interim, we must reduce our activity considerably below the already contracted level. We will focus on completing our highest priority projects, and those that

afford the Conservancy the greatest financial leverage. Instances where critical opportunities would be lost if no action is taken right away will be considered, as will low-cost starts of regionally important, large-scale efforts, such as watershed protection programs. These activities will be very limited, however, and Conservancy participation will necessarily be at a much lower level than in the past.

In the face of an increasing and more diverse population and a changing economy, California's coastal resources must be protected and wisely used, now and for future generations. The Conservancy will redouble efforts to develop real public-private partnerships, work with and through our very capable network of nonprofit organizations, and to find more creative ways to finance coastal projects. Nevertheless, to accomplish our goals, adequate funding must be made available as soon as possible, and this must include a major public contribution.



Barrie Grenell

Sincerely,

Executive Officer
State Coastal Conservancy

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In

the next century, what will the coast of California be like? Will California's people be able to get to it freely? Will its farms, its scenic open spaces still be there? What will its human settlements be like? What kind of jobs will it offer and for whom? Will there be enough undisturbed habitat to support other species? Will our waters be healthy and abundant with marine life? Or will they be polluted and sick? Will the surf wash up to our beaches healthy kelp or oil tar?

Didn't we vote on this?

"The Conservancy is a real leader and a pioneer. We've worked with many other agencies and have never found the same efficiency and creativity. The Conservancy always takes the straightest course to the objective. If there was ever a time that we needed an agency like the Conservancy, it's right now."

**Chris Kelly,
Director of Land Protection,
The Nature Conservancy**

Sixteen years ago, the people of California believed they had secured the future of their coast when the Legislature passed the California Coastal Act. It was a grand accomplishment—but now it is clear that it was only the beginning. In the past several years, the natural resource heritage the Act was to secure for future generations has been increasingly threatened by ever-growing pressures. Now, as those pressures accelerate while funds for resource management shrink, the future of California's coast is in jeopardy. Population growth, development, pollution, erosion, over-use, and deforestation are major issues of concern to public agencies charged with stewardship of the state's coast.

A living treasure

If we give up the vision spelled out in the California Coastal Act and the California Coastal Plan, we risk losing the wealth that belongs to all of us. Our coast is richly endowed with natural beauty and diversity. It is a 1,100-mile zone of beaches, cliffs, bays, rivers, and marshes. It is harbors, rail yards, piers, restaurants, shops, parks and hotels. It is salmon, steelhead, shorebirds, sea mammals, giant redwoods, palm trees, and swaying



grasses. It is big cities like San Diego, Los Angeles, San Jose, San Francisco, and Oakland; and it is small towns like Carpinteria, Morro Bay, and Trinidad. It is agriculture, foreign trade, commercial fishing, scientific research, surfing, vacationing. It is world famous, highly desired. Its dollar value is in the billions, but it is priceless because it is unique. The people of California value their coast as the greatest treasure in their natural heritage, and they have acted to ensure that future generations continue to enjoy it, and use it well.

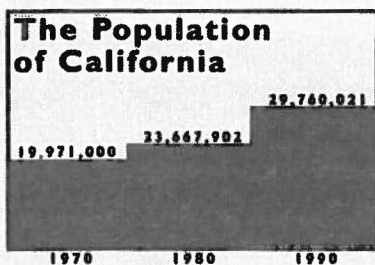
What the citizens did

To secure the future of the living coast they treasure, the people of California, by legislation and by initiative, created the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission in 1965. They passed Proposition 20 in 1972, creating the California Coastal Commission and directing it to draft a Coastal Plan to be adopted by the Legislature. In 1976, the Legislature passed the Coastal Act and created the State Coastal Conservancy. The two commissions regulate land use and development on San Francisco Bay's shore and on the coast, respectively. The Conservancy was a new concept as a state agency. It was given broad nonregulatory powers and ample flexibility, and charged with:



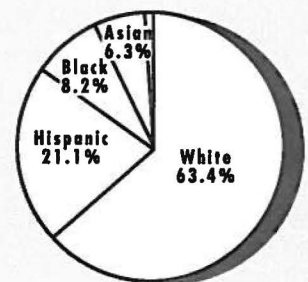
More People

In the last decade, the population of the state, its ethnic diversity, and the number of visitors to the coast have increased substantially. Seventy-five percent of California's 30 million people live within an hour's drive of the coast. The annual number of visitors to San Diego County's coast alone has been estimated at 30 million. Population and visitor growth is certain to continue, placing increasing demands on public access facilities and natural resources.



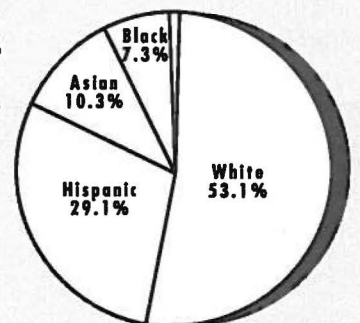
1980

Coastal counties population: 15.063 million



1990

Coastal counties population: 17.828 million



Source: California State Census Data Center



- Creating solutions to coastal land use conflicts that regulation alone could not solve
- Protecting and restoring coastal resources
- Facilitating environmentally sound development.

The Conservancy provides for public access, preservation of coastal agriculture, urban waterfront restoration and development, natural resource habitat protection and enhancement, reservation of environmentally sensitive sites, restoration of sites damaged by inappropriate rural development, and assistance to nonprofit land trusts and other nonprofit organizations. The Conservancy's responsibilities extend along the entire coast and around San Francisco Bay.

**"People on the Conservancy staff
have initiative and don't give
excuses why it can't be done."**

**Zeke Grader,
Pacific Coast Federation of
Fishermen's Associations**

The Conservancy's accomplishments

The Coastal Conservancy's accomplishments have been substantial. It has pioneered a way of operating that is unique in California and is now being copied elsewhere in the United States. Avoiding confrontation, the Conservancy has sought to resolve conflicts by designing innovative, environmentally sound, cost-effective projects that address the concerns of all involved, serve several purposes at once, and leverage financial resources. The Conservancy works in partnership with other public agencies, local governments, private landowners, and local nonprofit organizations, providing technical assistance, coordination, expert information, and funds.

Since 1978, it has expended about \$175 million, mostly in general obligation bond funds, on protecting and enhancing the state's coastal resources. Over 29,000 acres of land have been acquired using Conservancy funds. Some 400 projects have been completed, including:

- 180 entirely new coastal accessways opened to the public



- 30 accessways made accessible to wheelchair riders
- 147 wetland restoration, enhancement, and acquisition projects
- 46 projects funded to construct parts of the San Francisco Bay Trail
- 46 projects funded to construct parts of the Coastal Trail
- 11 major recreational piers restored for public use
- 20 coastal watersheds enhanced or slated for enhancement
- 5 problematic subdivisions in critical coastal areas consolidated
- 3 major conflicts resolved between agricultural use and natural resource protection
- 7,400 acres of farmland protected.

Conservancy projects have not only opened many new areas of the coast to the public and helped to protect its natural resources, they have stimulated local economies by enhancing recreational opportunities that attract tourism; retained commercial fishing activities and other vital economic activity; and generated substantial revenue for coastal communities and the state. Since 1978, the Conservancy has developed over 600 projects, which vary in complexity and range in cost from a few thousand dollars for a path to the beach to nearly \$6 million for the acquisition of Point Cabrillo in Mendocino County. Many of the projects have taken years of patient effort to accomplish. At the end of this fiscal year, Conservancy staff was managing 285 projects; more than 75 new projects were in planning stages. Because it has proved so successful, the Conservancy's way of doing business has inspired the creation of other public conservancies.

How we work

The past year's efforts have built on experience acquired in the past 14 years in the following areas.

"The Conservancy is a catalyst for bringing in other funds, and the spark plug for community involvement. I love the Conservancy and no one paid me to say it!"
Bud Laurent,
Chair, San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors



IMPLEMENTING THE CALIFORNIA COASTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

The Conservancy is an integral part of the state's federally certified coastal management program. The Conservancy actively assists in resolving local coastal program (LCP) issues and in implementing LCPs, especially when development plans conflict with public use or agricultural and natural resource protection. It has resolved many LCP problems, and has helped to implement most LCPs. The Conservancy's technical assistance is needed and appreciated by local governments. Hundreds of requests for help come in each year. The Conservancy operates in all coastal counties and the nine San Francisco Bay

Area counties. It works with nearly every harbor and port, park district, and numerous nonprofit land conservation organizations. The 1975 Coastal Plan identified 52 major coastal resource issues requiring resolution. The Coastal Conservancy has resolved 23 of these, and is now actively involved in efforts to resolve 15 more.

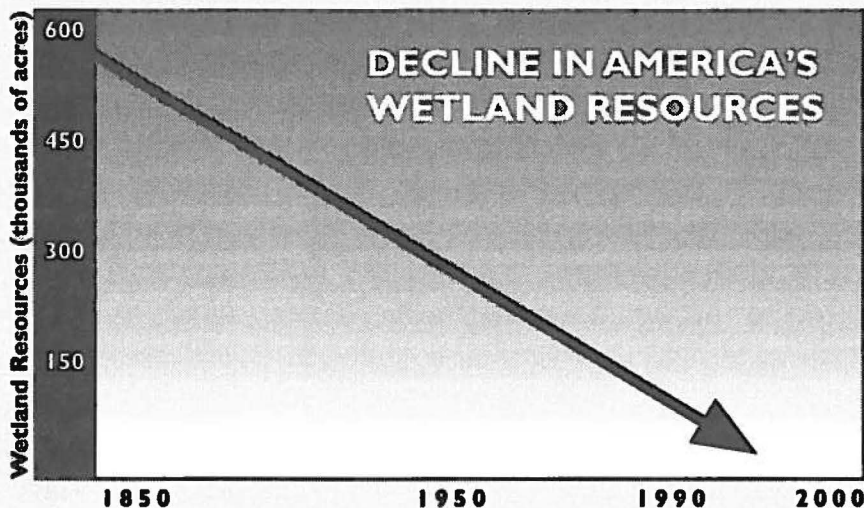
PROTECTING, RESTORING, ENHANCING RESOURCES

The Conservancy is the preeminent coastal resource restoration and enhancement agency in the state, and the principal agency acquiring and improving coastal wetlands, thereby sustaining the biological health of fisheries and marine resources. It has participated in the acquisition of more than 14,000 wetland acres and the protec-



Fewer Resources

In spite of efforts by the State Coastal Conservancy and others, sensitive natural resources have suffered under the combined impacts of population growth, development, pollution, erosion, over-use, and deforestation. Without proper stewardship, they will continue to diminish, and some will vanish. The work of the Conservancy and others has slowed the rate of loss but has not reversed the downward trend. The need to protect remaining wetlands, wildlife areas, riparian habitats, coastal forests, and other natural resources is now critical.



Source: *Wetlands Losses in the United States*, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1990



tion of 24,000. One-third of its funds have gone to such projects. About 100 projects have been completed and another 70 commenced since 1978.

The Conservancy is a pioneer in comprehensive watershed planning and restoration of coastal rivers, streams, lagoons, and wetlands. It has actively restored critical habitats; has worked to lessen the detrimental effects of sedimentation and to prevent natural resource losses that diminish people's quality of life, threaten recreational and commercial fisheries, and disrupt worldwide migration patterns of birds.

PROVIDING ACCESS TO THE SHORE

The Conservancy is the principal agency opening new public access to the coast and San Francisco Bay, having completed 150 access projects, with 40 more in progress. About one-third of the agency's funds have gone to public access projects. The Access Program has expended \$35 million to leverage \$140 million in other funds—a 1:4 ratio. Recent efforts have focused on southern California—an area of the coast under increasing pressure from a growing population.

The Conservancy has constructed recreational piers, stairways and ramps, trails, waterfront parks and commercial areas, opened scenic areas to the public, and pioneered in expanding access to persons with limited mobility. It has helped create low-cost hostels for coastal travelers. These projects have generated construction jobs and visitor-serving businesses, as well as fostering environmental education. As part of its Access Program, the Conservancy also develops publications informing the public of new and existing coastal access opportunities.

COORDINATING AND SHAPING URBAN WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT

As the state's designated agency for coordinating urban waterfront development, the Conservancy operates the principal state assistance program for planned rehabilitation of these waterfronts. It has completed 60 projects, and has 25 in progress. To revitalize urban

"The Conservancy works more efficiently than any public agency we have worked with."

**Audrey Rust,
Executive Director,
Peninsula Open Space Trust**



waterfronts, the Conservancy has authorized \$20 million, leveraging an additional \$100 million since 1978—a 1:5 ratio. The program has:

- Helped to expand opportunities and facilities for multiple use of waterfront areas
- Increased public access and recreational opportunities
- Promoted environmentally sound projects
- Protected, restored, and expanded coastal-dependent activities and facilities
- Provided technical assistance for project development
- Resolved land use and planning disputes
- Acquired property to construct improvements
- Helped to provide trails, promenades, piers, fishing wharves, parks, fishing facilities, and other visitor-serving and interpretive facilities.

These efforts are vitally important for the commercial and sportsfishing industries, tourism, recreation, and education. They generate construction jobs, and long-term jobs in fisheries, recreation, and visitor-serving industries.

“You have solved major controversies, which nobody else would or could do. You found the middle ground. You guys get ‘down and dirty,’ you get involved and influence the outcome . . . The Conservancy has got credibility, and the staff to make things happen.”

**Robert Fisher,
Director, Orange County
Harbors, Beaches and Parks**

SENSITIVE SITE RESERVATION

A major challenge now for the Conservancy is to secure habitat for wildlife as the coast changes and its human settlements grow, while also opening more of the coast to the public. The Conservancy’s Site Reservation Program has helped to avoid the loss of important resource lands by acquiring them for permanent protection, many as additions to state parks and beaches. Its innovative methods have minimized the public cost of acquisitions. With the Site Reservation Program alone, the Conservancy has expended \$9 million, all of which has been returned to the Conservancy, to place 50 parcels and 5,000 acres under permanent protection.

COASTAL RESTORATION

The Conservancy seeks to direct development away from areas where it would



destroy the coast's natural beauty, intrude on existing communities, or damage resources, to areas where development would complement local and regional resources and values. It has done this by:

- Reconfiguring obsolete subdivisions and correcting other undesirable conditions that adversely affect the coastal environment or impede orderly development
- Facilitating the transfer of development rights
- Accepting and designating open space easements
- Preserving important resource lands
- Coordinating community planning processes.

The Conservancy has completed ten restoration projects, and has 20 in progress, demonstrating innovative techniques of land and resource conservation while facilitating compatible development.

CONSERVING COASTAL AGRICULTURE

The Conservancy is the principal state assistance program for conserving coastal agricultural lands, having helped to protect more than 7,400 acres, mainly by acquisition of agricultural easements. Model projects prevent negative impacts from agriculture on wetlands and riparian corridors. The Conservancy has completed 40 projects and has 25 in progress. In helping to keep coastal agriculture viable, the Conservancy creates and maintains jobs and economic benefits to coastal communities, and preserves the scenic, rural character of much of the coast. This, in turn, attracts visitors to the coast.

PARTNER TO NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

The Conservancy has provided technical assistance for land trusts and other non-profit organizations to enable them to achieve goals in keeping with the Coastal Act, and to assist the Conservancy in carrying out its projects. Since 1980, it has disbursed over \$40 million to 77 nonprofit groups for important coastal protection projects and has

"The Conservancy was crucial to getting MALT's [agricultural preservation] program up and running, and especially important to demonstrate that the program could work. It enabled MALT to attract other funding from foundations."

**Bob Berner,
Executive Director,
Marin Agricultural Land Trust**



conducted 31 training programs. These funds and training make it possible for nonprofit organizations to play a leading role in protecting the coast and make limited public funds go further.

The past year

In fiscal year 1991-92, the Coastal Conservancy undertook new activities, in keeping with its mandate and with the Governor's Resourceful California initiatives. It completed 39 projects, some of which are described below. Many projects focused on providing economic benefits to coastal residents while protecting and enhancing the coast they

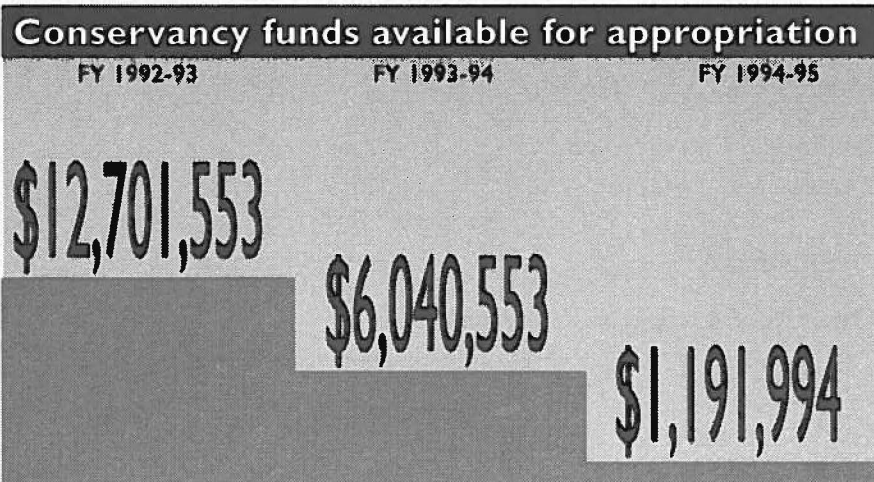
depend on for their livelihood. This continues to be the agency's focus as the state grapples with a faltering economy.

To serve its mission of protecting and restoring San Francisco Bay wetlands, the Conservancy undertook to restore wetlands in its model Sonoma Baylands project by using clean dredged materials from one of several Bay Area channel-deepening projects. (See p. 15.)

To help strawberry growers thrive as good neighbors to an important marsh, the Conservancy undertook the Azevedo Marsh project. To protect both irrigated vegetable farming and wetland habitat, and to help control sediment flow into a productive bay, the Conservancy began

Less Money

The Coastal Conservancy's financial resources have decreased, even as the call on them has increased. There is far too little funding to meet immediate and growing needs. The state is likely to have a deficit in the coming fiscal year, limiting the availability of future funds. An assessment by the Coastal Conservancy suggests that \$30 million to \$40 million annually will be needed to make a significant impact on coastal resource protection and enhancement.





the Chorro Flats project on Morro Bay.

At Gallinas Creek, the Conservancy's timely action to authorize preparation of an enhancement plan kept funds allocated for marsh restoration from being forfeited.

Expanding its efforts to help communities protect and manage watersheds so that natural and economic resources are secured, and coastal-dependent jobs and industries are sustained, the Conservancy continued its efforts at Tomales Bay, Estero Americano, Bodega Harbor, Elkhorn Slough, Estero de San Antonio, Moro Cojo Slough, Morro Bay, along Malibu Creek, and in the Mugu Lagoon watershed.

The agency moved forward in its efforts to protect the natural resources and provide public access in coastal river valleys, working with local jurisdictions, landowners, non-profit organizations, and other government agencies along the Russian River, Petaluma River, San Lorenzo River, Carmel River, Salinas River, Santa Ana River, Los Angeles River, Otay River, and the Tijuana Estuary.

In conjunction with the federally funded Local Marine Fisheries Impact Program, the Conservancy's Urban Waterfronts Program continued to work on the development of gear storage areas for commercial fishermen in the central coast. In September 1992, the Santa Barbara gear storage facility was opened for business. Last year, with support from the Conservancy, nonprofit groups helped build part of the San Francisco Bay Trail, bought land in the Cold Creek watershed in the Santa Monica Mountains, designed a plan to restore the Los Angeles River, enhanced Los Peñasquitos Lagoon in San Diego County, bought agricultural land on the Monterey Coast, and purchased a conservation easement on farmland along the Petaluma River in Sonoma County.

"The Conservancy constantly surprises us (pleasantly) with its ability to work on creative land protection projects."

**Erik Vink,
California Field Representative,
American Farmland Trust**



Where do we go from here?

THE GOALS

The Conservancy's vision is a protected, restored, and enhanced coastal environment with stable populations of fish and wildlife; a healthy economy where visitor-serving and coastal-dependent industry, business, and agriculture thrive and do not conflict with each other or with natural resources; scenic and open access for a California population that is now 30 million and growing, and is of all income levels, colors, and cultures. For the rest of the decade, the Conservancy will generate projects with these goals in view, to the degree that financial resources permit. It will emphasize more than ever the need for people of all walks of life to be involved in this work.

**"Just keep doing what you've been doing. You have an excellent track record."
Betty Wiechec,
Mountains Restoration Trust,
Malibu**

HOW TO ACHIEVE THEM

A detailed Conservancy assessment suggests that \$30 million to \$40 million per year will be needed during the next decade to protect irreplaceable resources, and facilitate environmentally productive approaches to coastal development. This investment in California's coast must be made now because the pressures on California's coast are accelerating, not abating. The Conservancy is creating new ways to stimulate the economies of coastal towns and cities while still carrying out its mission to protect the coast. In the coming year it will also look for new ways to sustain its ability to operate productively in a constricted fiscal environment.



Protecting resources
and solving land use
disputes require the
Conservancy to look at

The Big Picture



To protect coastal
marshes, erosion
upstream must be
controlled and the
entire watershed must
be considered.



To enable California's
citizens to enjoy their
coast, public access must
be expanded without
creating problems for
coastal farmers and
residents.

To protect coastal
agriculture, farmers need
relief from urban
development pressures.



To protect riparian species and
anadromous fisheries, river systems
need to be restored and protected,
and marine water quality
safeguarded.



Illustrations: Kim Scholle



To protect the economic
health of ports, sites for
disposal of dredged
material must be found
that do not harm the
coastal or marine
environment.



Enhancement

Over \$5 million was spent on acquiring, restoring, and enhancing 19 significant natural areas within the coastal zone and on San Francisco Bay during the 1991-92 fiscal year. Conservancy funds were used along with local government, public agency, nonprofit, and private sector resources to increase wildlife, fisheries, and recreational values of California's precious natural and scenic areas. More often than not, these enhancement efforts also resolved serious resource and land development disputes that delayed the creation of both private and public benefits. By placing individual problems in a larger context, where resource protection is on equal footing with economic development, solutions to long-simmering disputes can be found that promote compatible economic development while still protecting and enhancing critical natural areas.

Some of our major projects that exhibited these multiple objectives involved Tijuana Estuary and Elkhorn Slough national estuarine research reserves (land acquisitions/public access); the Santa Ana River, Morro Bay, and Nipomo Dunes (resource plan implementation); San Francisco Bay, Humboldt Bay, Mugu Lagoon, the Russian River, and Petaluma River (plan development/conflict resolution). These projects leveraged \$15.6 million in additional funds, and possibly saved the state an even greater amount by preventing further escalation of land use conflicts and their costly aftermath.

The Enhancement Program's direction and content during 1991-92 emphasized comprehensive river enhancement planning and implementation, port mitigation and the disposition of dredged materials, and refinement of goals and priorities.

Comprehensive River Planning

Enhancement plans were initiated on the Petaluma, Russian, and Santa Clara rivers after two years of activity on 16 major coastal and bay rivers. They reflect a growing realization that we can not afford to address estuaries without considering watersheds. Although the Conservancy will always focus its energies on the coast, solutions to downstream problems can only be found by looking at the entire system. That is why the Conservancy has embarked on a number of important river plans. These plans provide the basis for system-wide decision-making about rivers and adjoining land uses and are essential to the economic health of communities within a given watershed, and to the state.

River plans are currently underway or completed on the Otay, San Dieguito, San Luis Rey, Santa Margarita, Santa Clara, Santa Ana, Ventura, Carmel, Salinas, Pajaro, San Lorenzo, Russian, Garcia, Mattole, and lower Klamath rivers and Malibu Creek. The focus of most of these plans is on fisheries restoration and enhancement, protecting and enhancing significant wildlife populations and habitats, flood protection, and recreation, and on minimizing the effects of economic development on critical resources.

Jim King





Port Mitigation and Disposal of Dredged Materials

California's 11 major commercial ports pump billions of dollars a year into the state's economy and provide thousands of jobs. For example, San Francisco Bay Area ports generate \$5 billion a year, and 100,000 jobs. The continued viability and expansion of these ports are essential to sustain the state's economic growth. Harbor dredging is necessary to accommodate newer, larger ships and to maintain channels. However, locating an acceptable disposal site for dredged materials, or a mitigation site that compensates for port development impacts, is no small feat. For the last two years the Conservancy has been preparing a comprehensive report on port mitigation needs, issues, and problems (*The Port Mitigation Report*), and developing a 322-acre model wetland restoration project within San Francisco Bay (Sonoma Baylands) that will accept 2.5 to 3.0 million cubic yards of dredged materials. While these projects will not resolve all of the ports' current difficulties, they may improve the mitigation approval process and increase the acceptability of using suitable dredged materials for wetland creation.

Enhancement Goals and Priorities

During the last year, the Conservancy reviewed its goals and objectives to ensure that its limited staff and funding were being devoted to agency priorities and projects. It selected 20 enhancement projects as representing the most significant natural and scenic



resources in the coastal zone. These include the state's two national estuarine research reserves (Tijuana Estuary and Elkhorn Slough); two University of California natural reserves (San Joaquin Freshwater Marsh and Carpinteria Salt Marsh); two state ecological reserves (Bolsa Chica Wetlands and San Dieguito Lagoon); the largest and most significant wildlife corridors and rivers in the coastal zone; one of only six internationally significant natural areas established by The Nature Conservancy (Nipomo Dunes); and the most important wetlands on the Pacific Flyway: San Francisco Bay, Humboldt Bay, Elkhorn Slough, Mugu Lagoon, Tomales Bay, and Morro Bay.

While the Enhancement Program will continue to work on existing projects, future efforts will be directed at developing multi-purpose projects that create substantial environmental and economic benefits and reinforce parallel local, state, and federal efforts.



Port of Oakland

California's 11 major commercial ports pump billions of dollars a year into the state's economy and provide thousands of jobs. The continued viability and expansion of these ports are essential to sustain the state's economic growth.



Public Access

In 1991-92, the Conservancy continued to expand access possibilities to all visitors in southern California, to build the Bay Trail that will ring San Francisco Bay, and to work to open access to the coastline elsewhere.

In 1991-92, the Conservancy's Public Access Program determined that southern California beaches, open to the public in many places, lacked sufficient facilities to accommodate visitors. In a continuing effort to address these needs, over the past year the Conservancy authorized funding for stairways in Santa Barbara, Orange, and San Diego counties. It also authorized funding for the Ocean Beach boardwalk in San Diego County, which will connect Ocean Beach pier to existing access points.

Another high priority for the Public Access Program is completion of the San Francisco Bay Trail. Eight Bay Trail projects were completed last year, and work continues on three new projects—two in Richmond and one in San Leandro. Each project adds a link

in the trail, which will eventually provide hiking and biking access around the entire bay.

The Conservancy seeks to provide wheelchair-accessible pathways whenever possible. Wheelchair-accessible projects were completed during the last year in La Jolla, at the Point Reyes National Seashore, and Pebble Beach Park in Del Norte County.

Informing the public about access to the coast is another aspect of the Public Access Program. The *California Coastal Trail*, an inventory that indicates the route of the Coastal Trail and highlights incomplete sections, was completed last year. Its purpose is to inform local government decision-makers about the status of the trail, and to focus efforts on finishing it. Preparation of the *San Francisco Bay Shoreline Guide* was authorized in early 1992, with publication scheduled for 1994. Its purpose is to inform residents and visitors about trails and facilities, and to aid in the completion of the 400-mile Bay Trail. Several important acquisitions were authorized last year to accomplish goals identified in the Proposition 70 bond act, passed in

Richard Retecki



Brant Ward





1988 with the goal of preserving open space. In the city of Monterey, the Conservancy contributed over \$1.3 million toward the purchase of nearly 34 acres of sensitive dunes and beach on property known as the Del Monte Dunes. In Pacific Grove, the Conservancy helped fund the acquisition of two undeveloped oceanfront lots, known as Rocky Shores. In San Mateo County, the Conservancy authorized up to \$1.105 million to acquire about 120 acres of dunes, wetlands, and about one mile of beach in an area known as the Franklin Point Dunes. Tours of this sensitive habitat will be available to the



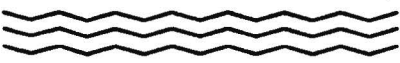
Michael Blesko

public. In northern Sonoma County, the Conservancy authorized \$400,000 toward the acquisition of 130 acres of forested land on the Lorenzini property, thereby adding a 1.5-mile segment to the Coastal Trail.



Peter Brand

Franklin Point Dunes is one of the acquisitions funded by the Conservancy last year to achieve the open space goals of Proposition 70.



Urban Waterfronts

Since 1981, the State Coastal Conservancy has provided more than \$30 million for development, planning, and project assistance for urban waterfront projects through its Urban Waterfronts Program.

These projects expand opportunities and facilities for public access and recreation; provide for environmentally sound development; and protect, restore, and, where feasible, expand coastal-dependent facilities, such as piers used by commercial fishermen. Conservancy waterfront projects have provided positive environmental and economic benefits and proved successful in managing and minimizing, if not eliminating, negative environmental impacts.

Several such projects and plans were completed in 1991-92, including restoration plans for the coastal and bay communities of Pillar Point Harbor (Half Moon Bay) and Rodeo. The restoration of Manhattan Beach Pier was completed. The pier houses a marine

educational facility that hosts thousands of schoolchildren from throughout southern California each year. And construction of the new \$10.8-million Huntington Beach Pier was completed, replacing a 76-year-old structure. Also completed was the 1.5-mile perimeter shoreline path around Berkeley's North Waterfront Park, providing access to an additional 50 acres of open space for pedestrians, bicyclists, and wheelchair riders. This \$3-million project, done jointly with the city of Berkeley, provides visitors with beautiful views of the bay.

The Urban Waterfronts Program also:

- Continued to work with several local communities to implement waterfront restoration plans at Port San Luis, Morro Bay, Antioch, Benicia, and Crescent City. For the latter, this final planning phase will include recommendations for beach access. With the help of the Conservancy, Crescent City opened a public fishing pier in 1989.

- Funded new waterfront restoration planning efforts for Morro Bay and for Fort

Marc Beyeler



Marc Beyeler





Mason's Pier 1 in San Francisco. The feasibility of siting a marine learning center on Pier 1 will be studied. The pier is now used by the National Park Service maintenance staff, but is expected to be vacated sometime in 1993.

- Continued efforts to restore piers in Ventura, Venice, and San Francisco.

- Continued work on several important commercial fishing projects, including project development of gear storage areas in several central coast ports as part of the Local Marine Fisheries Impact Program. The Conservancy authorized \$175,000 to the Port San Luis Harbor District to improve several commercial fishing vessel repair facilities; and \$325,000 to the city of Morro Bay to construct a commercial fishing gear storage area.

- Continued to provide technical assistance and funding for project feasibility analysis for a wide range of urban waterfront projects.



Marc Beyeler

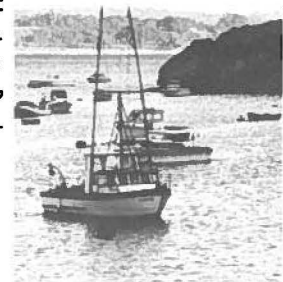


David Hayes



Opening of the new Huntington Beach Pier.

City of Huntington Beach



Marc Beyeler



Coastal Agriculture

Coastal farmland is one of the state's major economic assets. It provides over half a million jobs, produces some of the nation's most popular fruits and vegetables, and brings in one-third of California's total \$18-billion annual agricultural revenues. Most of the country's artichokes, avocados, broccoli, and cauliflower are grown in California's coastal areas, as are 75 percent of all strawberries sold in the United States. About 70 percent of the country's celery comes from three coastal counties.



Aside from these economic benefits, coastal agriculture also gives many stretches of the coast their scenic character, valued by residents and visitors alike. Some agricultural land also provides important wildlife habitat.

Population growth has led to great pressures for conversion of coastal farmland to residential and commercial uses, endangering these economic, scenic, and habitat values. Despite the protective provisions of the California Coastal Act, each year some 20,000 acres of coastal farmland are converted to other uses, chiefly by development. The Conservancy's Agriculture Program prevents such conversions. It does so primarily by acquiring conservation easements on farmland, or by purchasing farmland from willing sellers and reselling to farmers with the stipulation that the land remain in agriculture. In such projects, the Conservancy works with farmers, resource conservation districts, local nonprofit groups, and local governments.

Many of the Conservancy's agricultural projects are along the urban fringes, where they help to stabilize urban/rural boundaries and to prevent development. Near the border of the city of Petaluma, in Sonoma County, such a project was completed this year in cooperation with the newly formed Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District and the Sonoma Land Trust. With \$247,500 from the Conservancy and \$100,000 from the Open Space District, the District is acquiring a conservation easement over the 368-acre Cloudy Bend Farm, on the north bank of the Petaluma River. The farm, which grows hay to feed farm animals, will continue to supply the North Bay's dairy industry. Its preservation will also maintain scenic open space along the Lakeville Highway corridor.

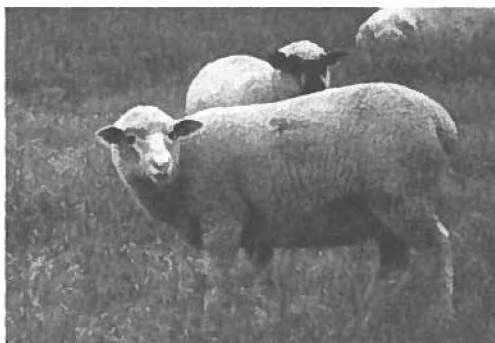
Another project that serves to stabilize development pressures along urban boundaries is the West Armstrong Ranch, near the city of Marina in Monterey County. To implement its previously approved Monterey County Agriculture Preservation Program, the Conservancy allocated \$1 million to the Monterey County Agricultural and Historic Land Conservancy to acquire a partial interest in this property. The Land Conservancy also purchased an option to acquire the remaining interest in the property if funding becomes available in the future. The project will prevent leapfrogging development from extending into the important agricultural and wild lands north of the Salinas River. It will also provide some revenues to the Land



Conservancy to continue working for agricultural preservation in the county.

The Conservancy continues to work to resolve conflicts between agricultural uses and wildlife habitat. In San Luis Obispo County, as part of the Morro Bay Watershed Program, \$835,000 from the gasoline tax fund administered by the California Transportation Commission was supplemented by the Conservancy's own funds to provide \$1.45 million to the Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District for the purchase of 128 acres of historic wetlands in the lower Morro Bay drainage, and for preparation of a management and enhancement plan. Directly adjacent to the city of Morro Bay, the property was threatened with development. A portion of the property, which has been farmed for over 35 years, will be returned to riparian habitat and used to trap sediment to help reduce sedimentation of Morro Bay; the rest will continue to be farmed, using practices that will not disturb adjacent sensitive habitat areas.

The Conservancy also successfully negotiated the acquisition of 120 acres of sensitive dune and wetland habitat that was part of a 750-acre agricultural property owned by Campbell Soup Co. This property had long been sought after by various state agencies. It will be transferred to the State Department of Parks and Recreation, and managed as an extension of the Año Nuevo State Reserve for public access and habitat protection. Campbell Soup Co. will continue to farm the rest of the property.



Many of the Conservancy's agricultural projects are along the urban fringes, where they help to stabilize urban/rural boundaries and to prevent development. Near the border of the city of Petaluma, in Sonoma County, such a project was completed this year with the acquisition of an easement over a farm at Cloudy Bend.



Nonprofits

The Coastal Conservancy provides technical assistance and project funds for nonprofit organizations that operate on the coast. In 1991-92, the Conservancy disbursed more than \$2.8 million to nonprofit organizations for projects, including:

- Buying the 56-acre Fisher/Youngblood property in the Santa Monica Mountains' Cold Creek watershed
- Buying a conservation easement over the 368-acre "Cloudy Bend" hay farm on the Petaluma River
- Doing wetland enhancement work in the Los Peñasquitos Lagoon in San Diego
- Buying the 192-acre West Armstrong Ranch on the Monterey County coast
- Building public access improvements to open a new park at Gorda, along the Big Sur coast

• Building four miles of the San Francisco Bay Trail at China Camp in Marin County.

The Coastal Conservancy has disbursed more than \$40 million to 77 nonprofit groups since 1980 for important coastal protection projects. Coupled with the startup advice and training on technical issues that the Conservancy has given dozens of coastal land trusts, state funds have gone a long way toward making volunteer organizations truly effective in helping achieve coastal conservation goals. In the process, the Conservancy has established a solid public/private partnership.

It is no news that public funds are scarce these days. That is why it is more important than ever for the Conservancy to work effectively with nonprofit organizations. With these private groups putting in time, energy, and money of their own, the Conservancy's contribution is magnified many times beyond its dollar investment.

Mountains Restoration Trust



Fisher/Youngblood property in the Santa Monica Mountains, acquired this year by the Mountains Restoration Trust.

Marin Conservation Corps



Members of the Marin Conservation Corps at work on the China Camp Trail.

Restoration/Site Reservation

During the past year, the Conservancy has continued to use its coastal restoration and site reservation programs to resolve issues in the private sector that jeopardize significant land resources. Through these programs the Conservancy engages private landowners and responsible public agencies in dialogue regarding resource protection, and develops solutions to conflicts.

In 1991-92, the Conservancy approved options to purchase two significant private parcels that should be public park land but were threatened with private development. Agreement was reached with willing landowners for state acquisition of the 160-acre Spring Ranch parcel extending from State Highway 1 to the ocean in Little River, Mendocino County. This property, adjacent to Van Damme State Park, is highly scenic. It provides an opportunity for the State Department of Parks and Recreation to develop parking, trails, and support facilities to meet the rapidly increasing visitor demand. North of the city of Fort Bragg, the Conservancy reached agreement with the Georgia-Pacific Corp. for sale to the state of the old log haul road extending from the large Georgia-Pacific lumber mill in Fort Bragg north to the Ten Mile River. This will permanently secure public access to ten miles of shoreline. The trail corridor is already heavily used by bicyclists, hikers, and equestrians. Under these option agreements, the state will have until 1995 to complete the purchase, allowing an

adequate period for voter approval of a new state park bond issue to provide the needed funds.

During the past year, the Conservancy initiated resource planning efforts at several sites to resolve longstanding disputes and enhance wildlife habitat resources. In the 105-square-mile Malibu Creek watershed, the Conservancy is working with nine governmental jurisdictions and many public agencies and private conservation groups to develop a watershed management plan that will correct the impacts of past and current land use practices. This watershed, including the very degraded Malibu Lagoon, is the largest drainage into Santa Monica Bay. In southern Ventura County, the Conservancy is working with Southern California Edison

and the city of Oxnard to restore a degraded salt marsh using wastewater from a power plant cooling system. Along the Los Angeles River, the Conservancy is working to enable local communities and private landowners to increase benefits from this historic watercourse through a program of recreational improvements and wetland enhancement.



Dedication of the Ten-Mile Haul Road at Pudding Creek.

Julia McIver



Completed Projects

Karen Rust



China Camp Trail, Marin County

Del Monte Dunes Acquisition (Enhancement/ Access)
Monterey County

Elk Creek Enhancement
Del Norte County

Hudeman Slough (Enhancement)
Sonoma County

ITT Marsh
San Mateo County

Sweet Springs Marsh
San Luis Obispo County

Andree Clark Bird Refuge
Santa Barbara County

Chula Vista Interpretive Center Marsh Exhibit
San Diego County

South San Diego Bay Enhancement Plan
San Diego County

Tijuana Reserve Visitor Center
San Diego County

Azevedo Acquisition for Enhancement and Agriculture
Monterey County

Chorro Flats Acquisition for Enhancement and Agriculture
San Luis Obispo County

West Armstrong Ranch, Phase I, Acquisition for Agriculture
Monterey County

Cloudy Bend Conservation Easement (Agriculture)
Sonoma County

Franklin Point Dunes Acquisition for Habitat
San Mateo County

Comprehensive Access Improvements, Phase I
Del Norte County

Battery Point Lighthouse Access
Del Norte County

China Camp Trail, Phase II
Marin County

Karen Rust

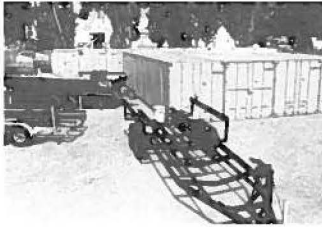


Alameda Bike Staging Area, Towata Park

City of Laguna Beach



Rock Pile Beach Stairway, Laguna Beach



Santa Barbara Fishing Gear Storage Area



Point Cabrillo

Dorothy Vrlend

San Francisco Bay Trail Workshops
Bay Area

Santa Monica Hostel
Los Angeles County

Marina Bay Shoreline Trail, Phase I
Contra Costa County

Berkeley North Waterfront Park
Alameda County

Benicia West 14th Street Trail
Solano County

Pillar Point Harbor Waterfront Restoration Plan
San Mateo County

Alameda Bicycle Staging Area
Alameda County

Morro Bay Embarcadero Street Ends Access
San Luis Obispo County

Pacifica Promenade, Phases I and II
San Mateo County

Commercial Fishing Gear Storage Facility
Santa Barbara County

Coastside Trail, Half Moon Bay
San Mateo County

Summerland Waterfront Restoration Plan
Santa Barbara County

Año Nuevo, Phase II (Access)
San Mateo County

Manhattan Beach Pier Restoration
Los Angeles County

Marina Dunes Access Staging Area
Monterey County

Huntington Beach Pier Restoration
Orange County

Rocky Shores Acquisition for Access, Pacific Grove
Monterey County

Point Cabrillo Acquisition for Access, Habitat and Lot Consolidation
Mendocino County

Santa Monica Mountains Backbone Trail
Los Angeles County

Bluff Park Stairs, Long Beach
Los Angeles County

Rock Pile Beach Stairway, Laguna Beach
Orange County

La Jolla Kellogg Park Barrier-Free Accessway
San Diego County



Manhattan Beach Pier

City of Manhattan Beach



Authorizations

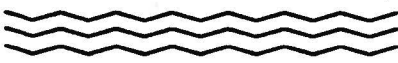
1991-92, in chronological order

PROJECT/COUNTY	DESCRIPTION	TOTAL PROJECT VALUE	FUNDING AUTHORIZED IN 1991-92
Mugu Lagoon Watershed/Ventura	Plan to reduce sedimentation in Mugu Lagoon	\$200,000	\$100,000
South Ormond Beach/Ventura	Restoration plan to create salt marsh and upland habitat on 125 acres	130,000	65,000
Cold Creek Watershed/Los Angeles	Acquire 56 acres for wildlife habitat and public access	2,300,000	1,180,000
Grandview Stairs/San Diego	Rebuild bluff stairs	535,280	100,000
China Camp State Park/Marin	Construct four miles of trail through state park	250,000	75,000
Otay River Valley/San Diego	Property appraisals	32,000	32,000
Nonprofit Technical Assistance/Statewide	Train nonprofit organizations through Trust for Public Land	106,500	50,000
Enhancement Preproject/Statewide	Hydrologic retainer contract	80,000	80,000
Agricultural Preproject/Statewide	Preproject feasibility analysis of potential agricultural projects	50,000	50,000
Los Peñasquitos Lagoon Enhancement/San Diego	Periodic dredging, escrow monitoring, biological monitoring	888,500	100,000
Morro Bay Watershed Enhancement/San Luis O.	Acquire and enhance floodplain land	1,450,000	615,000
Antioch Urban Waterfront/Contra Costa	Implement Phase I public access improvements	1,300,000	400,000
Rock Pile Beach Stairway/Orange	Rebuild damaged beach stairway	55,000	50,000
Los Angeles River/Los Angeles	Prepare a plan for recreation and wetland enhancement	125,000	125,000
Pacific Grove Acquisition/Monterey	Acquire two oceanfront lots known as "Rocky Shores"	800,000	200,000
Ballona Lagoon Teacher's Guide/Los Angeles	Prepare educational brochure for elementary school teachers	3,450	3,450
Agricultural Preservation/Monterey	Preserve north county agricultural lands	995,000	995,000
Del Monte Dunes/Monterey	Acquire 34 acres of oceanfront dunes next to state beach	4,235,000	1,385,000
Gorda Restoration/Monterey	Develop a scenic viewpoint on State Highway 1 in Big Sur	565,000	260,000
Azevedo Marshes Enhancement/Monterey	Port of Santa Cruz mitigation funds used to restore marsh	20,000	20,000
California Wetlands Consensus/Statewide	Facilitate state wetlands planning	75,000	75,000
Santa Ana River Enhancement/Orange	Implement enhancement and access plan for 250 acres	1,777,003	1,300,000
Tijuana River Acquisitions/San Diego	Acquire property parcel in the estuary	1,460,000	430,000
Malibu Creek Watershed/Los Angeles & Ventura	Multi-agency resource enhancement plan for Malibu Creek and Lagoon	600,000	85,000
San Leandro Bay Access/Alameda	Construct trail and bridge for Bay Trail segment	438,315	200,000
Gallinas Creek Wetlands/Marin	Prepare resource enhancement plan for wetlands in Marin County	9,000	9,000



PROJECT / COUNTY	DESCRIPTION	TOTAL PROJECT VALUE	FUNDING AUTHORIZED IN 1991-92
LMF:* San Luis Harbor/San Luis Obispo	Construct various commercial fishing improvements	\$175,000	\$175,000
LMF:* Morro Bay/San Luis Obispo	Construct various commercial fishing improvements	325,000	325,000
LMF:* Santa Barbara/Santa Barbara	Construct facility for storage of commercial fishing gear	150,000	30,000
South Bay Seasonal Wetlands/Alameda	Plan to enhance wetlands in south San Francisco Bay	115,000	75,000
Manhattan Beach Pier/Los Angeles	Rebuild Manhattan Beach Pier	4,200,000	365,200
Camino Del Sur Stairs/Santa Barbara	Rebuild bluff stairs	57,000	28,500
Ocean Beach Boardwalk/San Diego	Construct 2,500-foot boardwalk/public accessway along beach	300,000	300,000
Franklin Point Dunes/San Mateo	Purchase of sensitive dunes and wetlands	1,105,000	1,105,000
San Francisco Bay Access Guide/Bay Area	Publish an access guidebook to San Francisco Bay	100,000	100,000
Urban Waterfront Evaluation/Statewide	Conduct case study evaluations of urban waterfront projects	60,000	60,000
Lorenzini Acquisition/Sonoma	Acquire 130 acres of forested creekside land to connect two parks	528,250	400,000
Arcata Marsh Access/Humboldt	Construct new public access around "G" Street Marsh	150,000	150,000
Marine Learning Center/San Francisco	Study feasibility of establishing Center at Pier 1 in San Francisco	50,000	50,000
Bordessa Acquisition/Sonoma	Appraisal of wetland and agricultural lands	10,000	10,000
Cloudy Bend Easement/Sonoma	Purchase of conservation easement	357,500	257,500
Moro Cojo Slough Enhancement/Monterey	Plan to enhance wetland and agricultural resources	234,000	100,000
Richmond Marina Bay/Contra Costa	Construct 1-mile trail along shoreline and provide parking	509,000	194,000
Wildcat Creek Access/Contra Costa	Construct 1.2-mile trail with barrier-free observation platform	1,122,410	250,000
Crescent City Waterfront/Del Norte	Construct trail, beach ramp, and park amenities, all barrier-free	160,000	80,000
Palco Marsh Enhancement/Humboldt	Adoption of Phase II enhancement plan for marsh	900,000	0
Ten-Mile Haul Road/Mendocino	Option to purchase a 6-mile trail right-of-way for MacKerricher SP	880,000	100,000
Point Cabrillo Nonprofit/Mendocino	Establish nonprofit organization to manage Point Cabrillo Reserve	7,350,000	30,000
Spring Ranch Acquisition/Mendocino	Option to purchase 160-acre oceanfront parcel for Van Damme SP	1,900,000	100,000

*LMF = Local Marine Fisheries Impact Program



Selected Publications

1979-1992

Annual Report. Since 1979.

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The Urban Edge: Where the City Meets the Sea. Edited by Joseph E. Petrillo and Peter Grenell. Published in association with William Kaufmann Inc., Los Altos. 1985. 108 pp.

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1991-92 Annual Report

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*Photo: Herring Boats off Sausalito
By Peter Breinig*