

BOARD MEETING REMINDER

The **May 6, 2020** Board meeting will begin at **10:00 a.m.**



SAN JOAQUIN RIVER CONSERVANCY

The San Joaquin River Conservancy Governing Board
will hold a regular meeting on
Wednesday, May 6, 2020,
commencing at 10:00 a.m.

Consistent with Governor Newsom's Executive Order N-29-20, the public and Board members will participate in the meeting via Zoom or teleconference. Public comment will be accepted per the agenda.

This Board meeting will be available via Zoom.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/93682264096?pwd=RGpBUGNvTEZ6a0lwMmtLWUc1eXNrQT09>

Password: 524533

Meeting URL:

<https://zoom.us/j/93682264096?pwd=RGpBUGNvTEZ6a0lwMmtLWUc1eXNrQT09>

You can also join just by phone though you will not be able to see the PowerPoint.

Join by Telephone

Dial:

USA (216)706-7075

USA (866)390-1828 (US Toll Free)

Conference code: 234796

**MEETING AGENDA**

5469 E. Olive Avenue
Fresno, California 93727
Telephone (559) 253-7324
Fax (559) 456-3194
www.sjrc.ca.gov

GOVERNING BOARD

Mike Karbassi, *Chairperson*
Councilmember, City of Fresno

Steve Brandau, *Vice-Chairperson*
Supervisor
Fresno County Board of Supervisors

Brett Frazier,
Supervisor
Madera County Board of Supervisors

Santos Garcia
Councilmember, City of Madera

Kacey Auston, *Director*
Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control
District

Carl Janzen, *Director*
Madera Irrigation District

Julie Vance, *Regional Manager*
Department of Fish and Wildlife

Kent Gresham, *Sector Superintendent*
Department of Parks and Recreation

John Donnelly, *Executive Director*
Wildlife Conservation Board

Bryan Cash, *Assistant Secretary*
Natural Resources Agency

Jennifer Lucchesi, *Executive Officer*
State Lands Commission

Matt Almy, *Program Budget Manager*
Department of Finance

Bryn Forhan
Paul Gibson
Vacant
Citizen Representatives

John M. Shelton, *Executive Officer*

CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**A. ROLL CALL****B. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

Items identified after preparation of the agenda for which there is a need to take immediate action. Two-thirds vote required for consideration. (Gov. Code §54954.2(b)(2))

C. POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Any Board member who has a potential conflict of interest may identify the item and recuse themselves from discussion and voting on the matter. (FPPC §97105)

D. PUBLIC COMMENT & BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

Ten minutes of the meeting are reserved for members of the public who wish to address the Conservancy Board on items of interest that are not on the agenda and are within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Conservancy. Speakers shall be limited to three minutes. The Board is prohibited by law from taking any action on matters discussed that are not on the agenda; no adverse conclusions should be drawn if the Board does not respond to the public comment at this time.

E. CONSENT CALENDAR

All items listed below will be approved in one motion unless removed from the Consent Calendar for discussion:

E-1 ACTION ITEM: Approve Minutes of March 4, 2020**F. REGULAR SESSION ITEMS**

F-1 ACTION ITEM: Authorize Bond Funds to Augment the Sycamore Island Fishing Pond Enhancement Project Construction Budget, Department of Water Resources

G. ADMINISTRATIVE AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

Information Items. No action of the Board is recommended.

G-1 Organizations' Reports: If time allows, the following oral reports will be provided for informational purposes only, and may be accompanied by written reports in the Board packet.

G-1a. San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust

G-1b. RiverTree Volunteers

G-1c. Other Organizations (please contact the Conservancy if you wish to Report on your Organization - info@sjrc.ca.gov)

G-2 Deputy Attorney General Report

G-3 Executive Officer Report

G-4 Board Members' Reports and Comments

H. CLOSED SESSION

Before convening in closed session, members of the public will be provided the opportunity to comment on Executive Session agenda items.

H-1 CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL—EXISTING LITIGATION

Subdivision (a) of Government Code Section 54956.9.

San Joaquin River Access Corporation v. San Joaquin River Conservancy and specified Board members, Superior Court of California, County of Fresno Case #19CECG01138

H-2 Government Code Section 54957.0 (b) (1)

Public Employee Performance Evaluation

Title: Executive Officer

H-3 CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL—ANTICIPATED LITIGATION

Initiation of litigation pursuant to subdivision (c) of Government Code Section 54956.9:

One potential case

I. NOTICE OF ADVISORY AND BOARD COMMITTEE MEETINGS, OTHER PUBLIC MEETINGS RELATED TO CONSERVANCY MATTERS

None.

J. NEXT BOARD MEETING DATE

The next Board meeting is scheduled for 10:00 a.m. Wednesday, June 3, 2020, location to be determined.

K. ADJOURN

Board meeting notices, agendas, staff reports, and approved minutes are posted on the Conservancy's website, www.sjrc.ca.gov. For further information or if you need reasonable accommodation due to a disability, please contact the Conservancy at (559) 253-7324 or at info@sjrc.ca.gov.

250.20



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Jennifer Lucchesi, Executive Officer
 State Lands Commission

Karen Finn, Program Budget Manager
 Department of Finance

Bryn Forhan
 Paul Gibson
 Vacant
 Citizen Representatives

John M. Shelton
 Executive Officer

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
 Gavin Newsom, Governor

MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 2020
 SAN JOAQUIN RIVER CONSERVANCY

Board Meeting Location:
 Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District
 5469 E. Olive Ave., Fresno CA 93727

and
 California Natural Resources Agency
 1416 Ninth Street, Ste. 1311
 Sacramento, CA 95814

MEETING AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Karbassi called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and Mr. Garcia led the pledge of allegiance.

A. ROLL CALL

Name	Present	Telecon- ference	Absent	Late
Mr. Karbassi	X			
Mr. Brandau			X	
Mr. Frazier	X			
Mr. Garcia	X			
Ms. Auston	X			
Mr. Janzen	X			
Mr. Hatler	X			
Mr. Gresham	X			
Mr. Donnelly	X			
Mr. Cash			X	
Mr. Conner	X			
Ms. Finn			X	
Ms. Forhan	X			
Mr. Gibson	x			

Ms. Gavina confirmed a quorum was present.

Legal Counsel Present: David Pai, Deputy Attorney General

Staff Present: John Shelton, Executive Officer
Rebecca Raus, Associate Governmental Program Analyst
Vanessa Gavina, Staff Services Analyst
Heidi West, Program Manager, San Joaquin River Conservancy
Projects, Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB)

B. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Items identified after preparation of the agenda for which there is a need to take immediate action. Two-thirds vote required for consideration. (Gov. Code §54954.2(b)(2))

There were no additions to the Agenda.

C. POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Any Board member who has a potential conflict of interest may identify the item and recuse themselves from discussion and voting on the matter. (FPPC §97105)

There were no potential conflicts of interest.

D. PUBLIC COMMENT & BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

Ten minutes of the meeting are reserved for members of the public who wish to address the Conservancy Board on items of interest that are not on the agenda and are within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Conservancy. Speakers shall be limited to three minutes. The Board is prohibited by law from taking any action on matters discussed that are not on the agenda; no adverse conclusions should be drawn if the Board does not respond to the public comment at this time.

There were no public comments.

E. CONSENT CALENDAR

All items listed below will be approved in one motion unless removed from the Consent Calendar for discussion:

E-1 ACTION ITEM: Approve Minutes of January 8, 2020

E-2 ACTION ITEM: Authorize Agreements for Fire Prevention/Weed Abatement on Specific Conservancy Properties

Staff Recommendation: It is recommended the Board authorize fire prevention, weed abatement and fuel-load reduction agreements for various Conservancy properties as specified below.

Mr. Frazier moved to approve the Consent Calendar; the motion was seconded by Ms. Forhan. The motion passed as follows:

Roll Call Vote:

Name	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
Mr. Karbassi	X		
Mr. Frazier	X		
Mr. Garcia	X		
Ms. Auston			X
Mr. Janzen	X		
Mr. Hatler	X		
Mr. Gresham	X		
Mr. Donnelly	X		
Mr. Connor	X		
Ms. Forhan	X		
Mr. Gibson	X		

F. REGULAR SESSION ITEMS

There are no regular session items.

G. ADMINISTRATIVE AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

Information Items. No action of the Board is recommended.

G-1 Organizations' Reports: If time allows, the following oral reports will be provided for informational purposes only and may be accompanied by written reports in the Board packet.

G-1a. San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust

Ms. Sarah Parks, Development Director of the San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust (Parkway Trust), shared that they are in the midst of their Sycamore Island Field Program with the Madera Unified School District. They are working with sixth graders in the District by providing three program experiences. This past fall, they visited students in their classrooms; and during the winter, they all came to the River Center and visited Sycamore Island. One of the highlights of the program is canoeing. For many of these students, it was their first time being in a boat. She mentioned there were two teenage students that were terrified to be out on the water, but with a little encouragement, they overcame their fear, learned about teamwork, and joined the rest of their peers. She stated how this exemplified the importance of Sycamore Island for local children. She also mentioned that Thursday, March 12th at 5:30 pm would be the Parties for the Parkway kickoff and encouraged everyone to attend. It will be held in the Clovis Veteran's District Building in Old town Clovis.

G-1b. River Tree Volunteers.

Mr. Richard Sloan, with River Tree Volunteers, spoke about previous and upcoming activities. During the weekend, they plan to take down all the fish netting at the Conservancy's Liddell property. Adjacent to surrounding ponds, the property has netting covering certain areas and fencing around the brims with poles holding it up. The Perez family, who runs Bluff Pointe

Golf Course and Learning Center, agreed to take the some of the netting and poles to help prevent golf balls from going into the river, while Caglia Recycling will be able to take some of the metal and barbed wire. He invited people to come out Sunday to remove some of the netting. Also, he mentioned that in the same area, mosquito abatement staff went out to spray and ran into tarps and marijuana. They notified Mr. Perez that homeless people were inhabiting amongst the bushes. Mr. Perez called the police, who took care of the situation. Furthermore, Mr. Sloan mentioned that they are still hosting river trips every Wednesday and invited all in attendance to come out and canoe/kayak along the river.

G-2 Deputy Attorney General Report

Mr. Pai, on behalf of Ms. Deborah Halberstadt, stated there is nothing to report out of open session.

G-3 Executive Officer Report

Mr. Shelton mentioned there was an erosion at our Liddell property. A contractor was draining a landowner's pool and released some of the water, creating a crevice along the bluff. The landowner notified Conservancy staff and stated he would have it remediated. Mr. Shelton mentioned that a possible solution would be to have someone to dump dirt in. Although it looks unsightly, it is only bad for the landowner's yard and not Conservancy land because there is nothing more than open area down below. While investigating the erosion, staff came across the netting and considered getting rid of it. He spoke to Mr. Sloan, and the River Tree group stepped in and did one removal to determine difficulty, and then scheduled the next removal event.

Recently, an incident took place at the Milburn overlook, which overlooks the Milburn pond. There was a shooting, which resulted in a fatality. In response to this, neighbors in the area suggested that we do socials in the overlook areas to get more people and families out there and to help with monitoring the area. Although this is City property and not part of the Parkway, he stated he would be there. He extended the invitation to everyone saying it would be this Friday, March 16th at 6:30 p.m. There are other overlooks, such as Polk Avenue, Riverside Golf Course, and a few other areas, but he doesn't know if there will be socials at all of these places. If they do occur, it is because neighbors are coming together to host them. Potentially, something similar could occur in the Friant Cove area because it is comparable to the other overlooks. Friant Cove gets a lot of public use, so there is plenty of monitoring out there.

Conservancy staff attended a salmon release, which included a class that had participated in the Department of Fish and Wildlife's Salmonids in the Classroom educational program. The class is part of the North Fork TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) program. Specifically, it is a Native American TANF that covers a geographically large area. The students came out and released several young salmon. Unfortunately, the salmon had difficulty making it from North Folk down to the river, so it wasn't entirely successful for the fingerlings. Nonetheless, students still learned a lot. This was held at the Many Lightening's Native American Plant Garden down at Jensen River Ranch and hosted by Ms. Laura Wass, who manages the native plant area.

Mr. Shelton mentioned that he touched base with someone he worked with in the past who is the California Coordinator for American White Waters. This is an organization of canoers and kayakers that are dedicated to lobbying to keep rivers open for boat access. He invited her to come down to the San Joaquin River, as she is already doing some work up above Millerton Lake at the San Joaquin River Gorge Recreation Area. He would like to get together with some of the groups who have fairly large followings in the recreation field to network and let them know about the Conservancy's operations and upcoming events.

The Parkway Trust's Owl Hollow is going to have a pier soon, and there will be put-ins and take-outs for canoes. If there is anyone interested in a kayak/canoe trip, Mr. Sloan has offered, and staff from the Parkway Trust has offered in the past, so there are always plenty of opportunities

G-4 Board Members' Reports and Comments

Mr. Janzen, in reference to the previous minutes, inquired if the Conservancy had gotten the contract done with Sycamore Island.

Mr. Shelton answered that Sycamore Island is currently open and operating. There was a running event just before the public opening, so there was a temporary agreement in place for that, until we finalized the rest of the agreement. It is completed and operating fully. There is plenty of public use for people that are riding and running through the area.

Mr. Janzen commented that water in the river could be at its peak, and soon, but there may be less if we do not get any more rain.

Mr. Frazier stated that when he and Mr. Shelton went down south for mediation, they were able to meet with the Director of the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy in Calabasas. When they arrived, they were filming an episode of SWAT, the TV series, in the area. They inquired where his funding comes from, and the Director responded that they get 3.5 million dollars in film revenue. He mentioned that it was interesting to see the place. They charge fourteen dollars for Malibu citizens wanting to walk their dog. They had \$2.5 million from parking revenue and \$3.5 million from film revenue. He shared that it was an eye-opening thing, and that we will have to figure out how to sell our areas.

Mr. Shelton revealed that the Director mentioned that they have traffic cameras, which brings them plenty of revenue. They have them around their parks, and when a violation occurs, they send the violations through.

On inquiry from Mr. Garcia, Mr. Karbassi reported that the Fresno Bee article had some misinformation regarding the Milburn Pond Overlook gate. He clarified that the tragic shooting took place at approximately 2:30 a.m. on President's Day. The family was mourning on that site, and they closed the gate to vehicular access for two reasons: 1) to allow the family to mourn, 2) They were making security upgrades to the area with crews out there installing new lights and trimming vegetation, and did not want it to create problems for anyone else. It was made very clear that it was absolutely temporary. Currently, the gate has been open for approximately ten days now. Mr. Karbassi stated that overlook is not just for the

neighborhood, but it is an access point for the entire city. There were some that wanted to close it, but he was adamant about keeping it open. He is very encouraged by the neighbors who want to take back their park for the entire community because it is an asset for all of Fresno. In his District, there are many great access points to the River, such as Polk Ave. Camp Pashayan is another spot that will hopefully open up in the future. He reiterated that Milburn Overlook is open, and people are using it. On Friday, March 6, the Police Captain will be out there, and encouraged citizens from Fresno, Madera, and everyone else to come out there and show their support.

Mr. Garcia stated that they have a small office nearby, and they'll occasionally visit for peace of mind. He looks forward to attending an overlook social sometime.

Mr. Karbassi thanked River Tree Volunteers for taking him out along the river. They removed garbage and waste from several homeless encampments. He mentioned that he toured the river bottom with his team. He revealed that he grew up two miles from the river in Northwest Fresno, and he had no idea there was a river because there wasn't the necessary access at that time. He is encouraged and advocates further access so that people all over Fresno will be able to enjoy the second largest river in the state. He said he is looking forward to working with all of us and is looking forward to being our chairman.

H. CLOSED SESSION

Before convening in closed session, members of the public will be provided the opportunity to comment on Executive Session agenda items.

Ms. Sharon Weaver, Executive Director of the San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust, queried if there is any chance that the public could have a report at the next Board meeting regarding the Ad hoc committee and the settlement conference. She thinks it would be beneficial for the public to be informed.

Mr. Richard Sloan of River Tree Volunteers commented that he is a part of the San Joaquin River Access Corporation (Access Corporation), and that Access Corporation is averse to having any sensitive information released.

H-1 Government Code Section 54956.8

Consultation with real property negotiators concerning terms of negotiations, including price and terms of payment.

Property: Slenders
Madera County (APNs 048-280-009 and
048-280-011)

Negotiating Parties: Andrew John and Arlete Slenders

Agency Negotiators: John M. Shelton, San Joaquin River Conservancy
Daniel Vasquez, Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB)

H-2 CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL—EXISTING LITIGATION

Subdivision (a) of Government Code Section 54956.9.

San Joaquin River Access Corporation v. San Joaquin River Conservancy and specified Board members, Superior Court of California, County of Fresno Case #19CECG01138

Mr. Shelton reported out of close session that with regard to Item H-1, the Board provided staff with direction regarding negotiating with the landowner.

With regard to Item H-2, Mr. Pai reported that the Board was informed and discussed the conceptual framework for a potential settlement with the San Joaquin River Access Corporation. Staff and counsel will engage in further negotiations with the anticipation of a contingent settlement agreement and will be presented to the Board at the next meeting for approval.

I. NOTICE OF ADVISORY AND BOARD COMMITTEE MEETINGS, OTHER PUBLIC MEETINGS RELATED TO CONSERVANCY MATTERS

None.

J. NEXT BOARD MEETING DATE

The next Board meeting is scheduled for 10:00 a.m. Wednesday, May 6, 2020, location to be determined.

K. ADJOURN

Board meeting notices, agendas, staff reports, and approved minutes are posted on the Conservancy's website, www.sjrc.ca.gov. For further information or if you need reasonable accommodation due to a disability, please contact the Conservancy at (559) 253-7324.

Mr. Karbassi adjourned the meeting at 11:47 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

DocuSigned by:

John M. Shelton

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John M. Shelton

Executive Officer- San Joaquin River Conservancy



SAN JOAQUIN RIVER CONSERVANCY

Agenda Item

Item F-1

May 6, 2020

TO: San Joaquin River Conservancy Governing Board

FROM: John M. Shelton, Executive Officer 

SUBJECT: ACTION ITEM: Authorize Bond Funds to Augment the Sycamore Island Fishing Pond Enhancement Project Construction Budget, Department of Water Resources

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended the Board approve an augmentation of \$200,000 in Prop 12 and Prop 40 bond funds for an existing project to implement the Sycamore Island Fishing Pond Enhancement Project. The augmentation would bring the total project grant to the Department of Water Resources (DWR) to \$2,217,058.79 to complete construction. Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) authorization would be requested at their May 20, 2020 meeting.

SUMMARY:

In June 2017, the Conservancy Board authorized Proposition 1 bond funds, not to exceed \$1,606,627 to DWR to construct public access enhancements to an existing off-stream gravel pit pond located at the Conservancy's Sycamore Island property. The project will improve fishing for the public and accessibility to the pond within the recreation area. The project will provide a boat-launching and fish-stocking ramp, an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-accessible path and fishing pier for disabled individuals, an improved parking lot surface, and a restroom facility. The project also includes an articulated gangway connecting the fishing pier to allow it to move with the variable water surface elevations resulting from river flow changes. It also includes installation of a French drain that will allow water to flow into the fishing pond from an adjacent pond to improve the water quality in the pond and extend the useful season duration.

The recommended \$200,000 budget augmentation is requested to partially offset higher than expected costs to construct the new facility.

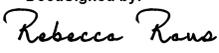
Prior to approval of funding for final design, permitting, and construction of the project, estimated costs to construct were \$594,800. Over the following two years, as DWR approached completion of final plans, estimates rose to over \$700,000. The increase was primarily attributed to the need for a permit-required extraordinarily short construction window, the addition of the paved trail from pier to restroom to comply with ADA requirements, and permit delays. Additionally, the Central Valley Flood Protection Board permit required that DWR increase the size of the steel piles that hold the pier in place.

DWR has implemented project changes to reduce costs, including an agreement with the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) for less expensive river cobble. DWR also eliminated the need for concrete stairs, curbs, and retaining walls to the vault restroom plans.

DWR advertised the project in December 2019 and the bids were opened in January 2020. The lowest bid was \$976,080. Combined with the tree-clearing contract with the Fresno County Economic Opportunities Commission and the agreement with DFW for cobble, the total construction contract costs are approximately \$415,000 higher than originally estimated and budgeted. DWR has identified potential savings of nearly \$100,000 and will work with the contractor to achieve efficiencies and minor design changes. These savings, plus applying most of the remaining contingency funding toward the balance, leaves a shortfall of about \$200,000.

DWR has already increased in-kind funding allocation to the project to cover labor cost increase that are expected to total about \$488,000. The labor cost increase resulted from unforeseen permit labor needs, additional permit requirements leading to more staff design, monitoring, and inspection time, and delayed construction that required additional project management time.

The project has been approved by DWR to move forward to construction in late summer 2020.

DocuSigned by:

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Rebecca Raus
Associate Governmental Program Analyst



SAN JOAQUIN RIVER CONSERVANCY

Agenda Item

Item: G-3

May 6, 2020

TO: San Joaquin River Conservancy Governing Board

FROM: John M. Shelton, Executive Officer 

SUBJECT: INFORMANTION ITEM: Executive Officer's Report

RECOMMENDATION:

This report is provided for informational purposes. No Board action is recommended.

SUMMARY:

Update on Current Activities of the Conservancy, with a more detailed update on a highlighted Project.

In order to keep the Board apprised of current activities, plus remind you of all the progress that has been made in the past, I will be reporting at future Board meetings on current projects and other activities. The San Joaquin River Parkway (Parkway) is depicted in Figure 1: SJR Parkway Existing features, from the SJRC Master Plan Update 2018. If you have not read through the Conservancy's Master Plan Update, it is available at <http://sjrc.ca.gov/Parkway-Master-Plan-Update/>, and is a great reference. The Conservancy has acquired over 2,600 acres of land along the San Joaquin River (Table 1: SJRC Properties, updated from the SJRC Master Plan Update 2018). In addition, for each report, one or two project complexes will be highlighted with additional background information so that activities can be put into the context of the multipurpose aspects of not only the San Joaquin River Parkway, but with individual components. This month, I will be highlighting the Ball Ranch and Ledger Island properties, what we have accomplished, and what we are working on. In this regard, the report will also cover some of the connections between the Conservancy's properties at Ball Ranch/Ledger Island and the Willow Unit of California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), the trail system of Tesoro Viejo, and a potential connection to Cemex's Rockfield (Friant) Aggregate Facility properties.

COVID 19 and the Conservancy: The **Conservancy's office** is closed to the public until further notice due to COVID-19 related directives and orders from state and local agencies to prevent the spread of the virus. However, in order to provide the public with a continuity of service while protecting both the public and our employees, the Conservancy remains open for business by phone, email, and regular mail. Because our office has transitioned to telework for the duration of this emergency event, there may be some delay as we work to respond to all requests in a timely manner. We have all of our emails and phone calls forwarded, so our regular contact information remains valid, but due to the way our system works, we are also using work focused Gmail accounts to make our electronic correspondence more direct. You may can still reach us at our general email: info@sjrc.ca.gov and office telephone (559) 253-7324.

State Parks closed the **Friant Cove Parking lot** on Sunday evening, March 29th, and has left it closed since State Parks has decided to close all of their parking lots and parks to vehicular traffic. At that time, their parks were still open for pedestrian access with the restrooms open.

San Joaquin River Parkway & Conservation Trust closed **Sycamore Island** on March 16th out of concern about the health and safety of their employees and volunteers who interact with the public at this site. Access to Sycamore Island by foot or bike is still possible through the Van Buren properties, and in monitoring use of Wildwood, we have noticed steady use, with the public mostly practicing physical distancing, at least between family groups. **Wildwood Native Park** is still opened on Friday, Saturdays and Sundays. As mentioned above, Conservancy staff has monitored use to make sure that social distancing is being practiced.

Lastly for this item, **Bluff Pointe Golf Course & Learning Center** is closed due City of Fresno's Ordinance No. 2020-10 "Shelter in Place" Covid-19 Mandatory shut down of non-essential businesses. The gates were closed on March 19th. The Perez's reacted quickly to this order, and in communication with them, the staff assured them that we would recommend to our Board that after the order is lifted, we would work with them concerning lease payments. According to state guidelines, at least in the broadest context, we assured them that we would not evict their business due to this closure or any direct result of this response to the mandatory shut down, and that if they missed payments they should send us a written explanation that we can use for our records. Staff is bringing this to the Board for your discussion and direction in our closed session.

Focused Project Complex Update:

1. Ball Ranch & Ledger Island – Willow Unit, Tesoro Viejo and Cemex

Background: Ball Ranch is a 360 acre property that is adjacent to the Willow Unit of California Fish and Wildlife's San Joaquin River Ecological Reserve (see Figure 2: SJRC and CDFW Lands - Ball Ranch, Willow Unit and Ledger Island complex.) Ledger Island is across the San Joaquin River is 162 acres.

The community of **Tesoro Viejo** is a partnership between The McCaffrey Group and Lyles Diversified. Nearly a quarter of Tesoro Viejo's 1,600 total acreage has been set aside for open space and outdoor recreation, including a planned 15-mile trail network. The McCaffrey's formed a 501(c)(3) nonprofit named the Tesoro Viejo Conservancy that collects one-tenth of 1% of every home sold or resold at Tesoro Viejo, in addition to funds from various fund-raising events. Although Tesoro Viejo is not adjacent to the San Joaquin, their property connects to the river bottom, and they have a ½ mile dirt road that leads from a corner of the development to a bluff overlooking Ball Ranch and Ledger Island. They plan to install a paved walking and cycling pathway with access to the river on this road. The access from the top of the bluff to the River will be an improved dirt trail that would continue to the gravel road that crosses the River at the Bridge. The McCaffrey's also own a narrow strip of land next to the Sumner Peck Winery that connects Friant Road to the River in between Ball Ranch and Ledger Island and next to the Conservancy's bridge. As part of their trail plans, the McCaffrey's are proposing a two-lane road, with room for parking, that would provide Fresno County access to the Parkway from Friant Road. In order to connect to the Conservancy's trail system on the Madera County side, they plan to use the Bridge that crosses the San Joaquin River onto Ledger Island.

In September 2018, the developers brought this idea to the Conservancy Board and asked that the Conservancy work with them as they work with the State Lands Commission (SLC) to connect their development's trails to the San Joaquin River Parkway. The Board passed Resolution 18-02, Intent to Cooperate in Public Access Application for Ball Ranch

and Ledger Island Trails to the SLC, formalizing our cooperation with the Tesoro Viejo Conservancy in this process. On August 16, 2019, Tesoro Viejo Conservancy submitted an application to the SLC for a general lease of sovereign lands. Brent McCaffrey had warned us that the application was a starting point, and that it would need to be modified as discussions precede. Randy Collins, SLC's Public Land Management Specialist, sent a letter to TVC rejecting the application due to a lack of specificity. As quoted in the Fresno Bee, Brent McCaffrey said, "I view that as a good thing because it told us everything we need to do." (<https://www.fresnobee.com/opinion/opn-columns-blogs/marek-warszawski/article234165037.html>). Of interest were a couple of issues to be clarified, including who is the most qualified lessee is for construction, use, and maintenance of improvements on sovereign land, and improvements to the existing bridge. The bridge, although the Conservancy at times informally describes it as ours, is on state sovereign land and is currently under lease (Lease No. 8364) to the San Joaquin River Conservancy by SLC. Staff has communicated with SLC staff that we believe that the Conservancy should continue to hold the lease for the bridge, and we should be the lessee for the rest of the sovereign lands within this project area. The McCaffrey's have responded to the questions regarding the bridge modifications with the offer to undertake preliminary design for a bridge replacement that, then, could be part of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) coverage for this project. As described in our Master Plan criteria, the new bridge, though focused on pedestrian and bicycle traffic, should be designed to allow passage of emergency and maintenance vehicles.

River Partners received Proposition 1 funding from the Conservancy in 2015 to develop a restoration opportunities analysis document for the Ball Ranch and Willow Unit properties. River Partners produced the "Habitat Restoration Opportunities Analysis for the San Joaquin River Parkway, Ball Ranch and Willow Unit: Fresno County, California" in 2017. This analysis covered all of the Conservancy's Ball Ranch and 137 acres of the 225 acre Willow Unit (see Figure 4). It describes scientifically based ecological design and implementation activities for restoring and enhancing approximately a total of 515 acres of riparian, wetland, and upland habitat along the San Joaquin River (Figure 6). Based on their analysis of the site, River Partners identified 78 contiguous acres of both Ball Ranch property and Willow Unit property that would provide habitat and species benefits if restored in the near future. This would be the first implementation of a multi-phase restoration project. The Board approved a project in September of 2019 by River Partners to undertake: 1) A site-specific restoration plan that builds off of the Opportunities Analysis and provides planting and irrigation designs for Phase 1 restoration (restoration to be completed with future funding); 2) Filing of a CEQA document that will cover restoration actions across the Ball Ranch and Willow Unit project sites (a total of 604 acres, including the 78-acre site identified in the Opportunities Analysis); and 3) A hydraulic analysis and Encroachment Permit from the Central Valley Flood Protection Board (CVFPB) that will allow implementation of Phase 1 and subsequent phases of restoration.

In December of 2019, **CEMEX** filed the Rockfield Modification Project application with Fresno County proposing to modify and continue their operations with a new operational plan. As part of their announcement, they have consulted with staff so that their proposal remains consistent with the San Joaquin River Parkway Master Plan by helping further the Conservancy's work to extend the multipurpose trail (Eaton Trail) through their properties. Their plan proposes deeper mining but will not expand the boundaries of the current operations, will include operational modifications and new equipment and will update the quarry's reclamation of the site. Such plans serve as an environmental blueprint for how the quarry will be restored when the quarry's supply of hard rock reserve

is depleted. At that point, the plant and quarry operations will close, and the processing plants removed. The sites will be graded, and the areas around the ponds will be planted with native vegetation for the benefit of local wildlife, habitat, and potential outdoor recreation. They plan to begin reclamation while mining is actively underway. In our discussions, the Conservancy is proposing that CEMEX help us with the multipurpose trail along the front of their current plant site and along the River at their extraction site. As part of the county's planning process, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will be prepared and made available to the public, as required by the CEQA. During this process, the project will undergo extensive environmental review by an independent third party hired by Fresno County, and there will be multiple opportunities for the public to submit written and oral comments and to attend public hearings.

Finally, the Conservancy is working with the **Sierra Resource Conservation District (Sierra RCD) and the Southern Sierra Regional Water Management Group (SSRWM Group)** in fuels reduction and re-use of biomass. The Sierra RCD has received funding through the California Fire Safe Council and to implement the Eastern Fresno County Firesafe and Stewardship Fuels Reduction Program. The Sierra RCD's District Manager, Steve Haze and I have been working on the SSRWM Group since its inception over 10 years ago. The SSRWM Group has been able to secure funding for several organizations and agencies over the years for water and ecological projects and has been integral in working with the Sierra RCD in putting together plans for an integrated healthy forest/fuels reduction/biomass effort. Sierra RCD has received funding from the California Department of Conservation (DOC), California Department of Water Resources (DWR), California Fire Safe Council (CFSC), CAL FIRE and others, totaling approximately \$5,000,000 in funded commitments. As part of this, Sierra RCD has been developing an implementation strategy working with small landowners that have been significantly impacted by tree mortality in providing for the removal of log decks remaining from fuels reduction programs. In discussion with Steve Haze, the Conservancy will be taking some of the first logs to be removed under their program and storing them at Ball Ranch. In the future, we will put these logs to use either in restoration implementation – adding carbon to the soils over time as they decompose, or to help with traffic control by placing logs at spots along access roads and trails as a natural fence. Again, as these logs are placed, we will be looking over the long term for them to decompose in place and create healthier soils. At this point, we will have them stacked along one of our gravel roads near the big pond, and out of the way, but in an area that has plenty of room and historically has been compacted by gravel truck operations.

Current Status: Tesoro Viejo CEQA work is on hold, while Tesoro Viejo gets a better read on the economic picture and how to adjust to current conditions. In the meantime, their consultants are still working through initial designs and analysis. River Partners had their initial kickoff meeting electronically on Tuesday, April 21st. One of their first issues to undertake is to secure a CEQA consultant. We also discussed how to set up stakeholder meetings electronically but have further discussions once they have their sub-consultants hired. CEMEX's status is similar to Tesoro Viejo, in that the County of Fresno is working on their processes to hold CEQA scoping meetings virtually. CEMEX and their consultants said that they will keep us informed as this process continues. The Sierra RCD is moving forward with their work, though Conservancy staff has only agreed to this first transfer of logs at Ball Ranch, so that we can put together plans to use the materials and to get an idea of what it will entail to move them around.

Other Current Projects Updates:

2. Van Buren – Valley Children’s Hospital – Hwy 41 Bike/Pedestrian Bridge

Staff was in the process of getting a meeting set up with Merced County before the COVID-19 related directives were released to discuss Madera County priorities in relationship to the Parkway. The meeting was to discuss three different projects: 1) Van Buren or River West Madera (with a tie in trial to Valley Children’s); 2) River Vista Bridge Remnant Removal and recreation facilities; and 3) potential development of a General Plan element on the San Joaquin River Parkway. The City of Fresno is thinking about putting together a grant application to the Conservancy for an Alternative Analysis to construct a bicycle/pedestrian bridge. Although we met with staff from the Development and Resource Management Department and one of their regular consulting firms a few months ago, probably due to the pandemic priorities, progress has not been made.

3. Multiuse Trail from Hwy 99 to Millburn Overlook

There is now an active Facebook group, San Joaquin River Socials, which formed in response to crime and nuisance issues at the Millburn and Polk Ave overlooks. Members of this group have participated, along with staff, on RiverTree Partners organized cleanup at the Liddell properties. This activity has resulted in all the old bird netting being removed, along with post and a fence that blocked the connection between the old fishponds and the wetland/ponds next to Bluff Pointe golf course. In discussions with Board Member Karbassi and several of the neighbors, we are discussing how to move forward in connecting River Bottom Park with the Liddell Property, and then, to the Millburn Overlook. Mr. Karbassi and the neighbors are interested in modifying both the Millburn Overlook and the Polk Avenue Parking lot to make it more resistant to nuisance activities and family friendly. Conservancy staff believe that a comprehensive proposal to accomplish this, plus to open a hiking and mountain bike path between Millburn Overlook and River Bottom Park, could be devised in cooperation between the City and Conservancy staff. Since River Bottom connects to the multiuse trail at Riverside (about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of paved trail exists with a parking lot next to Riverside Golf Course). I hiked the small portion of this proposed route between Liddell and River Bottom, about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile, along an existing “fisherman” trail. Although this area is on a steep bluff, in discussions with a member of the Central California Off Road Cyclists who has training and expertise in trail construction and maintenance, we believe a usable hiking and biking trail is possible.

An extension of the Trail from the Riverside portion of the multiuse trail to Camp Pashayan has a small reach that will need further information. This is an area that is proposed to be developed into a housing tract. The Riverside Trail is already extended along a development, and any future developments would likely also extend the trail, but staff has not seen any planning documents at this point for that area. We have talked with the Fresno County Horse Park operator (John Marshall), and he is interested in working with the Conservancy.

4. River Vista Bridge Remnants, Parking, and Gravel Path

The River Vista project is ready to move into implementation. Prior discussions have mostly focused on Madera County applying for grant to undertake final design, permitting and construction. With the two counties working together to build a new vehicular bridge at Friant (Road 206 or North Fork Road), we are now in discussions with the County of Fresno, who is the lead on this replacement, to see if they can add to the new bridge construction project, the removal of the old bridge remnants. We are also going to work with them to assist the effort to add onto the new bridge project a bicycle/pedestrian passage. It is our understanding that under state guidelines that including bicycle crossings of Rivers into existing or replacement infrastructure is a priority (see Fresno COG’s SB743 Local Assistance Program and Regional Guidelines). In discussions with

Boardmember Brandau, he believes that both the bridge remnant removal and bicycle crossing should be part of the new bridge work if practical.

5. Vinnard/Circle V – Potential Native American Cultural and Environmental Resources Center

Stay tuned on this proposal. I have had discussions with several organizational representatives and some tribal members about the idea of using the property at Vinnard. This 20 acre parcel has two houses that are currently vacant. The houses sit on top of the bluff and overlook the Vulcan properties (including the Conservancy's Gibson Property and Rank Island). Since this parcel is relatively isolated from other Conservancy properties in Madera County, connecting it by trail is quite a way into the future. The property's river bottom area has a very nice oak woodland and riparian forest plant community and would be ideal for Native American cultural activities. Any future project would need a lot of discussion and alternatives development before a proposal can be brought to the Board. The structures need some work in order to be leased or rented to bring them up to code and safety guidelines, but this sort of project could be relatively simple from a permitting standpoint. With the landscaping having several citrus and other fruit trees, staff is hoping that we can keep the grounds healthy this year.

6. Lost Lake Park Master Plan and Facilities Improvements

The County of Fresno is still working on getting a grant to the Conservancy to finish the Lost Lake Master Plan update and to upgrade a couple of their playground areas for American with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance. Although these projects are important for the County, due to staffing turnover and other priorities, they have not been able to provide any grant applications yet. Wildlife Conservation Board staff, along with Conservancy staff, have offered assistance.

7. Long Term – Office at the Parkway?

Staff is in the beginning stages of looking at establishing an office out on the Parkway. Although our office at the Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District is very affordable, having an office on the Parkway offers some great benefits. Part of the reason for this discussion is both the potential availability of willing sellers of two promising properties and in doing the brainstorming regarding the Vinnard homes. Operating an office will take additional funding and administrative resources, but the ability to be on the Park and able to respond to the needs of our users quickly, is important. We believe that if we move in this direction in the future, we will need quite a bit of planning and potentially some partners to co-locate with us to defray operating costs.

DocuSigned by:

John M. Shelton

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John M. Shelton
Executive Officer

San Joaquin River Parkway Master Plan Update

Figure 5-1
EXISTING FEATURES

Figure 1: SJR Parkway Existing features, from the SJRC Master Plan Update 2018

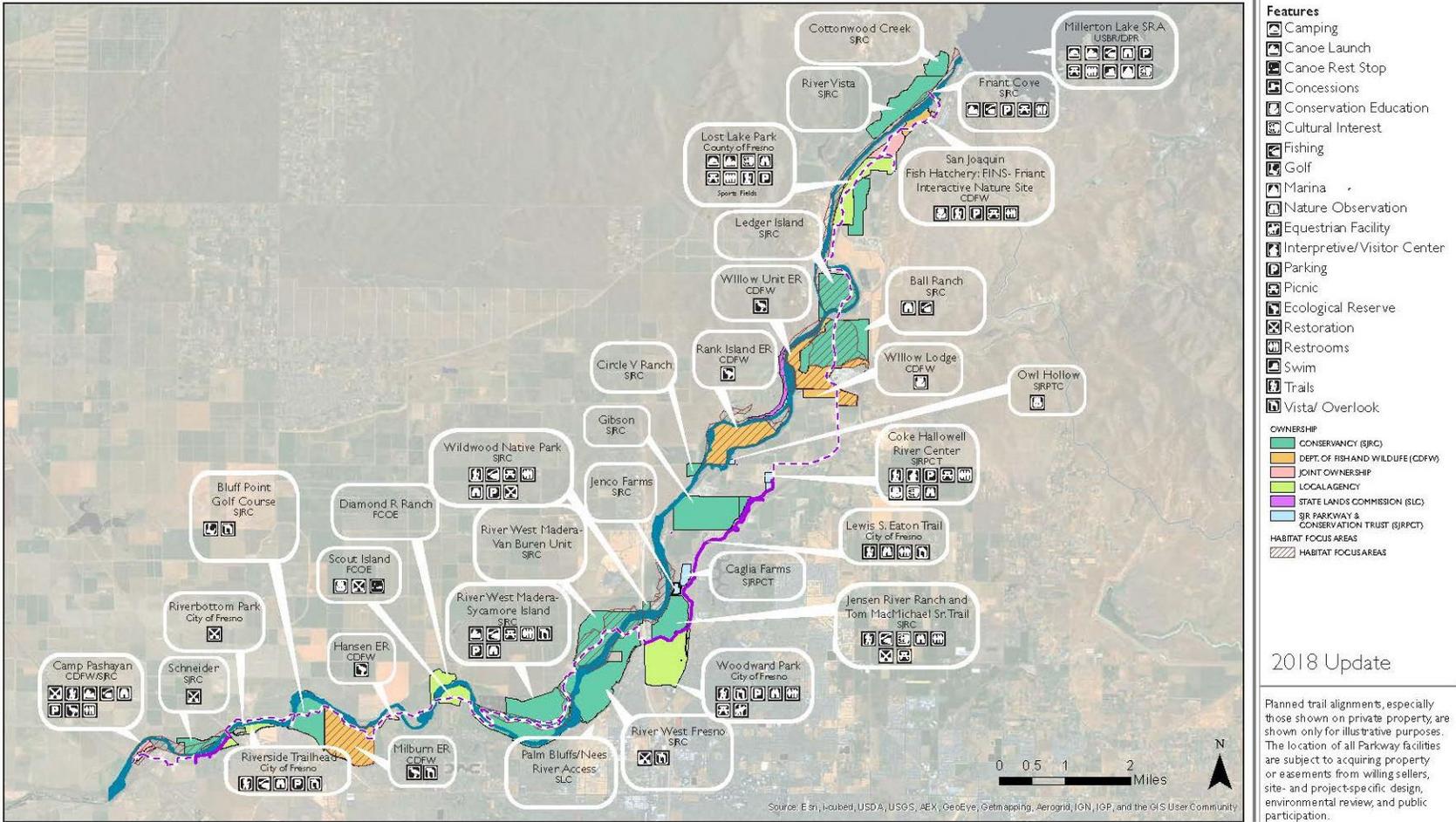


Table 1: SJRC Properties, updated from the SJRC Master Plan Update 2018

San Joaquin River Conservancy Properties			
Land Acquisitions	Year	Fresno (Acres)	Madera (Acres)
Wildwood Native Park	1996	0.00	22.00
Jensen River Ranch	1997	156.10	0.00
Beck	1998	105.92	0.00
Friant Cove	1998	2.64	0.00
Ball Ranch	2000	358.40	0.00
Schneider	2000	0.00	47.10
Wagner (aka Cottonwood Creek)	2001	0.00	64.32
Ledger Island	2001	0.00	161.17
River Vista	2001	0.00	176.66
Van Buren (aka Proctor, Broadwell, Cobb, part of River West Madera)	2001	0.00	261.54
Willow Lodge (Finch, Glaspey)*	2002	40.00	0.00
River West Fresno (Spano)	2003	290.84	50.00
Sycamore Island	2005	0.00	347.00
Transfer of lands between DFG and SJRC including River Vista, Van Buren, Ledger Is, and Moen	2006-08		974.54
Liddell/Bluff Pointe Golfing Center	2005	134.00	0.00
Gibson	2008	320.96	0.00
SJ Fish Hatchery (Friant Station)*	2008	2.00	0.00
SJ Fish Hatchery (Hovannisian)*	2011	0.17	0.00
Camp Pashayan**	2012	11.43	0.00
Jenco Farms	2015	23.16	0.00
Circle V Ranch (Vinnard)	2016	0.00	20.82
Cobb/Madera Co	2020	0.00	11.52
Total	2,607.75	1445.62	1162.13
*These lands were acquired by the Conservancy to be managed under the jurisdiction of CDFW.			
**Camp Pashayan was originally acquired by the River Parkway Trust in 1995 and later sold to the Conservancy.			
		Fee	
	Subtot	Fresno (Acres)	Madera (Acres)
San Joaquin River Conservancy Properties	2607.75	1445.62	1162.13
Other Public Lands	854.52	649.02	205.50
Total Public Lands in SJR Parkway	3462.27	2094.64	1367.63

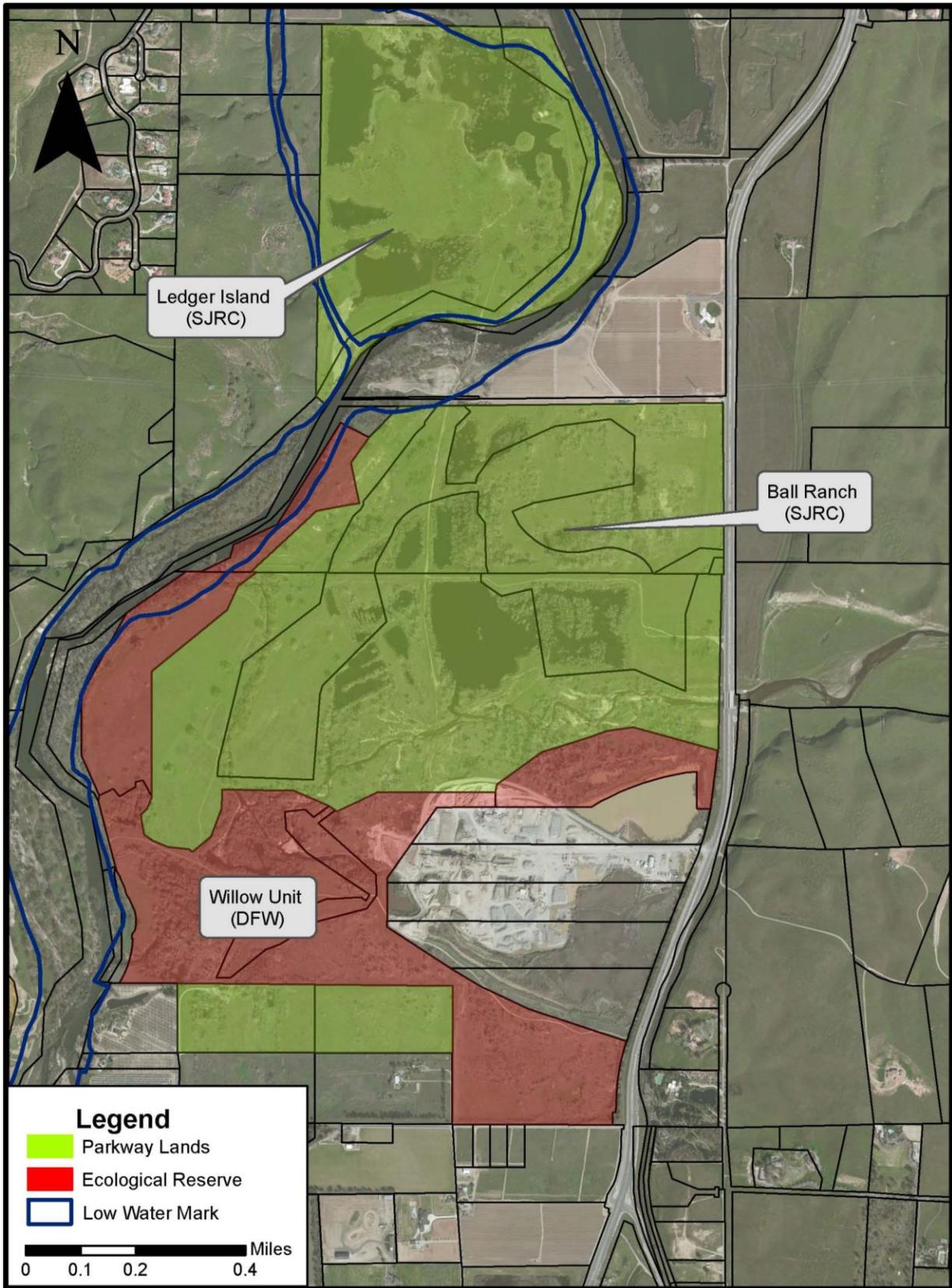


Figure 2: SJRC and CDFW Lands - Ball Ranch, Willow Unit and Ledger Island complex.



Figure 3: Trail Map of Tesoro Viejo from their website: <https://tesoroviejo.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/TESV19038-Trail-Brochure.pdf>

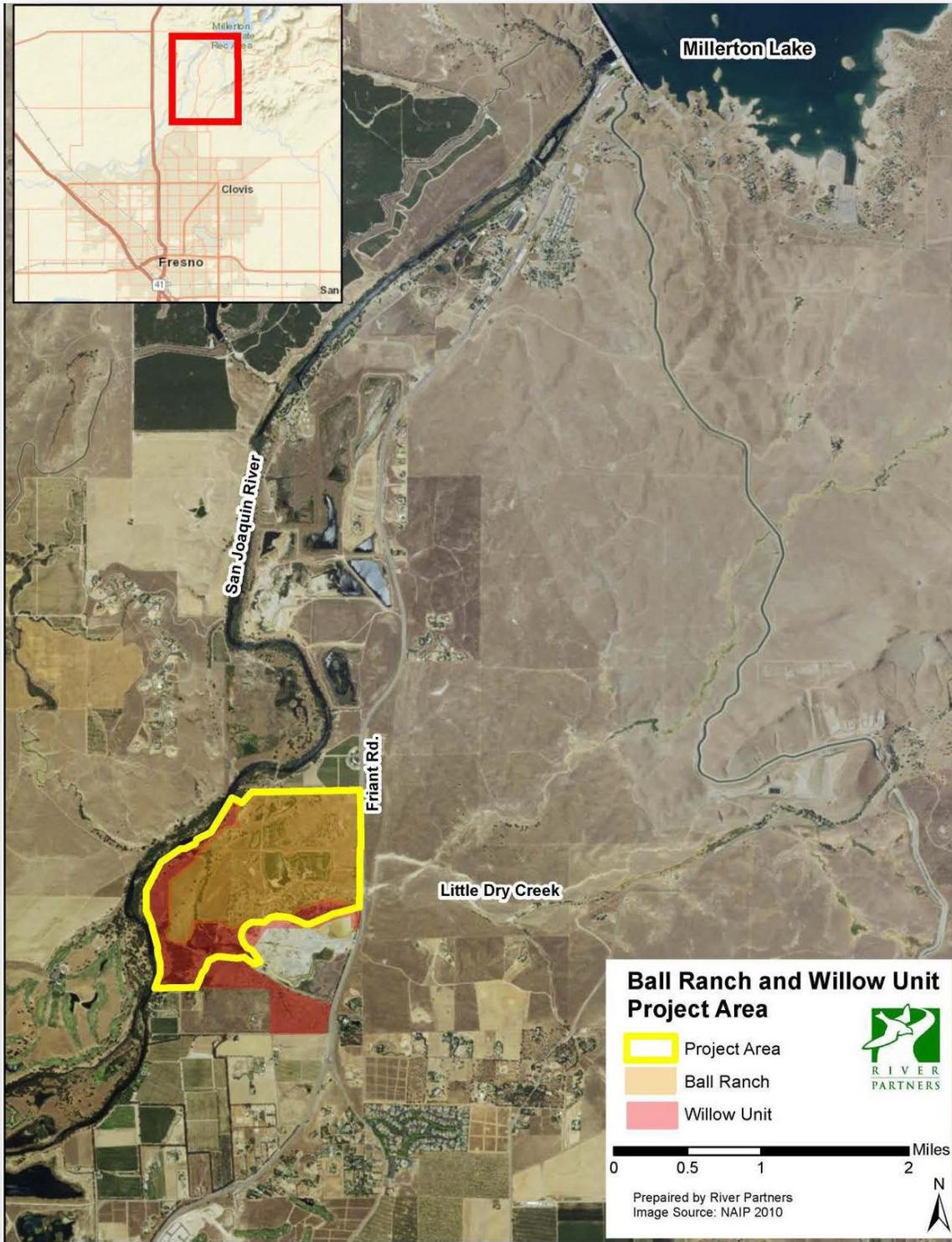


Figure 4: River Partners Project Location for their Opportunities Analysis



Figure 5: Proposed Ball Ranch Phase 1 Restoration Site

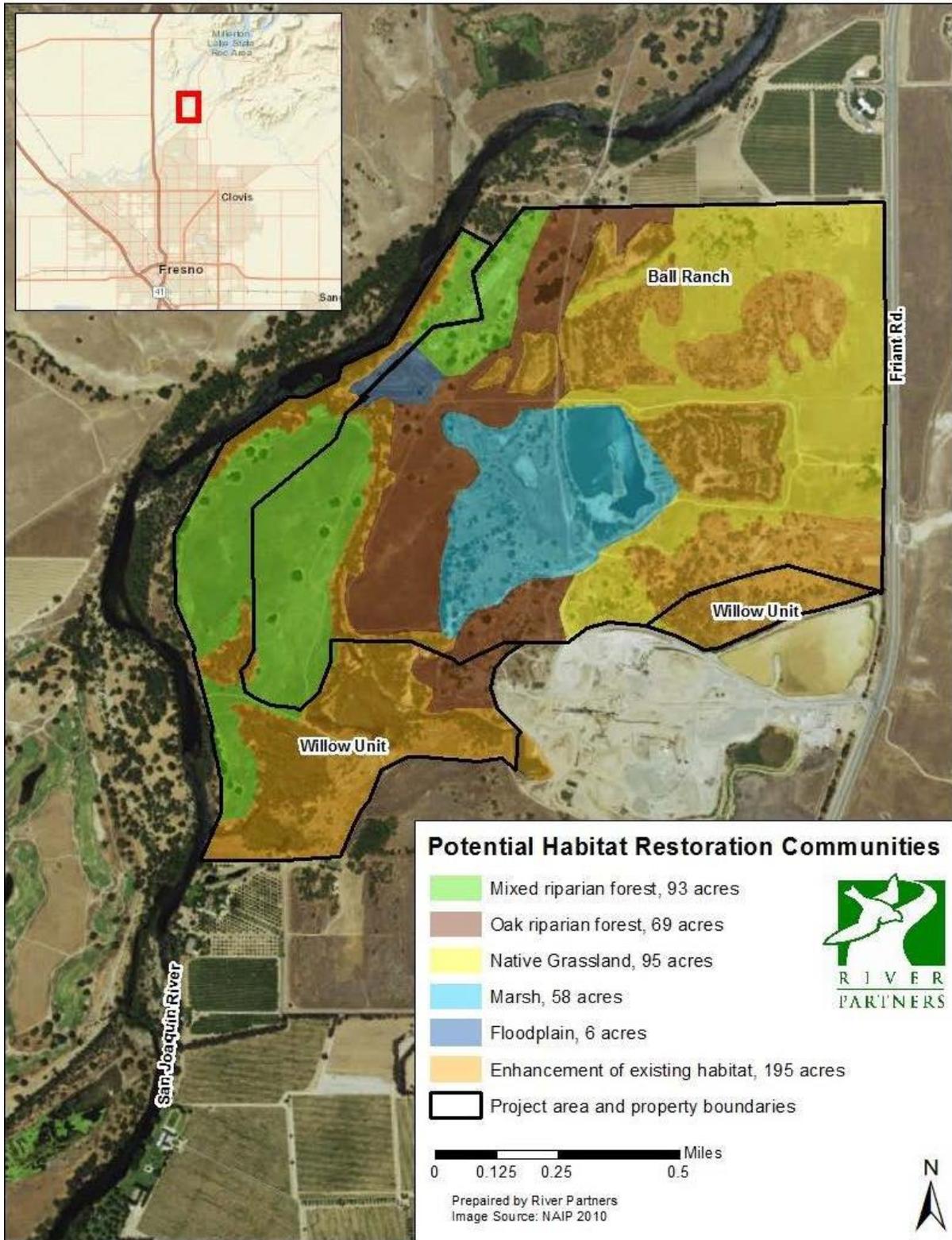


Figure 6: Potential Habitat Restoration Communities at Ball Ranch and the Willow Unit, from River Partners Opportunities Analysis.

Rockfield Modification Project

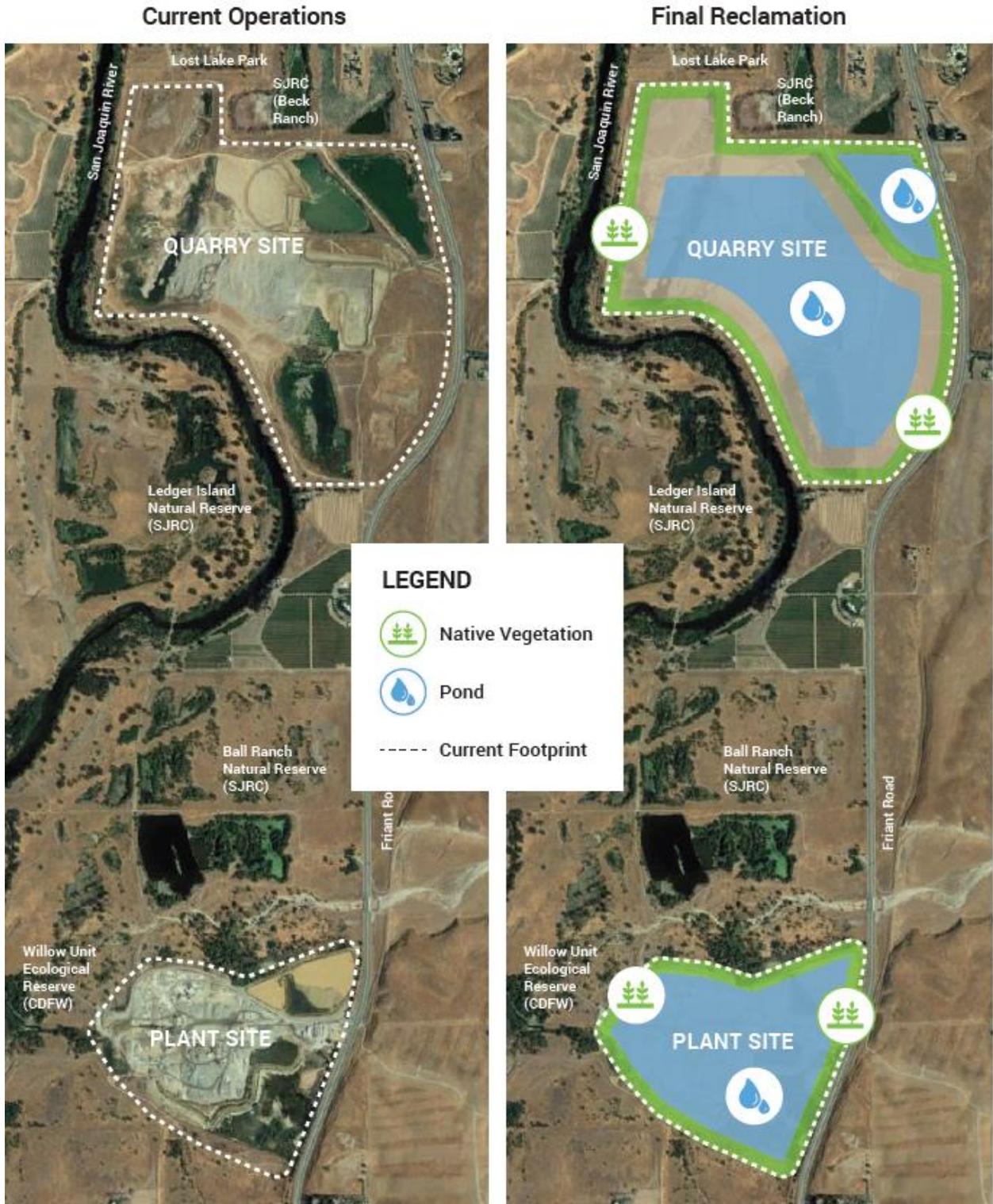


Figure 7: Cemex's Rockfield Plant and Quarry Site, from their website - <https://www.cemexusa.com/rockfield>