

PUBLIC LANDS HIGHWAYS DISCRETIONARY PROGRAM (PLHD)
FY 2011 GRANT APPLICATION

PART A. PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title:	Sears Point Access Road & Trail, San Pablo Bay NWR
Project Location (Include City/County, State):	Sonoma County, CA
State Priority (to be completed by State DOT):	
GRANTEE CONTACT INFORMATION	
Grantee Contact Name:	Don Brubaker
Federal Agency/Project Sponsor:	USFWS, San Pablo Bay NWR (81644)
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STATE DOT CONTACT INFORMATION	
State Contact Person:	
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FHWA DIVISION OFFICE CONTACT INFORMATION	
Division Contact Person:	
Phone:	
Fax:	
E-Mail:	
CONGRESSIONAL INFORMATION	
Congress Member:	Lynn Woolsey
Congressional District No.:	6

PLHD Program Funds Requested:	\$2,250,000			
Leveraged Funds (if applicable):	\$21,230,000			
Total Project Cost (includes funding request plus leveraged funds if applicable):	\$23,480,000			
TO BE COMPLETED BY THE FHWA DIVISION OFFICE				
State Administered?		Yes	X	No
Federal Lands Division Administered?		Yes	X	No
If yes, which Division?				
Direct Allotment of PLHD funding to Federal Agency?	X	Yes		No
If yes, which Federal Agency?	USFWS, San Pablo Bay NWR (81644)			
Can the project be obligated by September 30, 2011?	X	Yes		No
Date grant application approved by FHWA Division Office				

Part B. Project Abstract

(Maximum 5 sentences) Briefly describe the how PLHD Program funds will be used to support the proposed funding request.

Current access to San Pablo Bay NWR headquarters and the Baylands Center is by either crossing traffic on State Route 37, or pulling off the road shoulder, where posted speed limits are 65-mph (Figure 1). State Route 37 is the main east-west commuter route at the top end of San Francisco Bay. Sears Point Access Road and Trail Project will provide safer access for refuge staff, visitors, and school-bus loads of elementary students participating in environmental education and restoration activities. The 1.3-mile road-trail combination will provide wildlife viewing, and access to future bicycling and hiking paths detailed in the San Francisco Bay Trails Plan. The proposed route is already incorporated into the *Sears Point Wetland and Watershed Restoration Project* plans and draft EIR/S.

Part C. Project Narrative

- *(Maximum 2 pages) Describe how this funding request improves access to, within, or provides access to Federal lands or facilities and addresses one or more of the following eligibility categories identified below. Describe the project and the expected results, including project goals in context of the eligibility category selected, project schedule, and line item (scaleable) budget. Please associate each line item in the budget with a completed task, deliverable, or outcome that contributes to the completed funding*

- 1) *Transportation planning for tourism and recreational travel, including the National Forest Scenic Byways Program, Bureau of Land Management Back Country Byways Program, National Trail System Program, and other similar Federal programs that benefit recreational development.*

The Sears Point Access Road & Trail Project for San Pablo Bay NWR would implement the planned access road to the refuge headquarters and Sonoma Land Trust, Baylands Center as part of the greater *Sears Point Wetland and Watershed Restoration Project* (Figure 2). The restoration project, is a partnership with Sonoma Land Trust, California Department of Fish & Game, and Ducks Unlimited. Currently, Sonoma Land Trust owns the portion of land where the road and trail will be constructed. However, this land is in the process of being conveyed in fee title to San Pablo Bay NWR. This access road and trail will enable San Pablo Bay NWR to greatly fulfill the compatible wildlife-dependent recreational uses involving hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, and environmental education and interpretation as detailed in National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997. The access road will provide an auto-tour route while the trail will allow visitors to bike and hike along the route from the refuge headquarters to the saltmarsh wetlands along San Pablo Bay. Additionally, the access road and trail will connect refuge visitors to the San Francisco Bay Trails network.

- 2) *Adjacent vehicular parking areas.*

The Sears Point Access Road & Trail Project will have parking areas at the refuge headquarters and along Reclamation Road (Figure 1). These facilities augment parking at the Sonoma Baylands and Tolay Creek trails access points.

- 3) *Interpretive signage.*

Visitor contact stations containing interpretive signage and trails information will be included as part of the overall *Sears Point Wetland and Watershed Restoration Project*.

- 4) *Acquisition of necessary scenic easements and scenic or historic sites.*

This component is inherently satisfied as the location the Sears Point Access Road & Trail Project is under ownership of the Sonoma Land Trust which will be conveyed to San Pablo Bay NWR. The road and trail will provide visitors with a sweeping view over the north end of San Francisco Bay, to include vistas of the city from one of the few remaining rural settings in the Bay Area (Figure 1).

- 5) *Provision for pedestrians and bicycles.*

The Sears Point Access Road & Trail Project will provide an approximately 3,600-

foot pedestrian and bicycle route via a separate path paralleling the refuge HQ access road. This design will allow bicyclists and pedestrians a safe route to stop and observe and photograph the wetlands and wildlife resulting from the *Sears Point Wetland and Watershed Restoration Project* (Figure 2).

- 6) *Construction and reconstruction of roadside rest areas, including sanitary and water facilities.*

Turn-outs will be incorporated to allow for auto-touring along the access road. Additionally, a picnic and sanitary facility will be established among trees as the road swings north to the refuge headquarters (Figure 2). This facility will allow visitors travelling along the San Francisco Bay Trails network a rest stop and the option to visit the refuge headquarters (Figure 2).

- 7) *Other appropriate road facilities such as visitors centers as determined by the Secretary.*

The San Pablo Bay NWR Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) calls for numerous visitor contact stations and facilities for the refuge. Step-down plans subsequent to the CCP will include a visitor and environmental education center and administrative facility located at the San Pablo Bay NWR headquarters.

- 8) *A project to build a replacement of the federally owned bridge over the Hoover Dam in the Lake Mead National Recreation Area between Nevada and Arizona.*

The Sears Point Access Road & Trail Project proposed here has no application to the Hoover Dam project.

- *If applicable, describe how the project meets priority consideration criteria.*

The Sears Point Access Road & Trail Project provides for multi-modal access for visitors to participate in a variety of wildlife dependent recreational activities as the road will be paved and the paralleling trail will have a hardened surface. Walkers/hikers and bicyclists will have a separate path from auto-tourists which will manage safety concerns, increase transportation options, and enable greater enjoyment of wildlife dependent activities such as photography, environmental education, and interpretation.

- *Describe how the project meets the project selection criteria*

The Sears Point Access Road & Trail Project will provide safer access to San Pablo Bay NWR headquarters and the Baylands Center as current access is either by crossing traffic on State Route 37, or pulling off the road shoulder, where posted speed limits are 65-mph. Instead, by using the stop-light controlled junction of SR37 and Lakeville Road, refuge visitors will have protected left and right turns onto Reclamation Road which will connect to the proposed access. This will have a traffic calming effect and certainly

provide far safer access to the refuge. Additionally, the proposed trail paralleling a section of the access road will provide visitors the opportunity to connect to current and future trails along the bay.

- *Discuss the project schedule, commitment of leveraged funding, both public and private, and any other PLHD or other Federal funding being used for the project. For applicants other than the State DOT, discuss coordination with State DOT and MPO, as well as ability to act on behalf of the applicant jurisdiction, and ability to meet Federal funding requirements.*

The table below shows funding committed to the *Sears Point Wetland and Watershed Restoration Project*. This funding has already covered initial routing of the Sears Point Access and Trail Project, and permitting to include EIR/S and California Environmental Quality Act documentation. Funding provided from this proposal would complete design and establishment of the access and trails portion. The restoration project is to commence in spring of 2012.

<u>Leveraged Funds Break-down - Sears Point Access Road & Trail Project</u>		
Sonoma Land Trust	Design, permitting, CEQA, and NEPA	\$1,150,000
Sonoma Land Trust	Habitat acquisition, restoration, and interim stewardship funds raised	\$20,000,000
Ducks Unlimited	Design and engineering donated funds	\$80,000
		\$21,230,000

Part D. Project Eligibility

- Does the project within, adjacent to, or provide access to Tribal and/or Federal lands? Please identify which specific Public and/or Tribal land (i. e. Yellowstone National Park, Allegheny National Forest, BLM Lands, or Navajo Reservation).*

The Sears Point Access Road and Trail Project will provide access to San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge and access to California Department of Fish & Game, Sears Point Wetlands Units.

- If the project does not meet the above criteria, on what basis do you consider this project eligible?*

The Sears Point Access Road and Trail Project does meet the eligibility criteria.

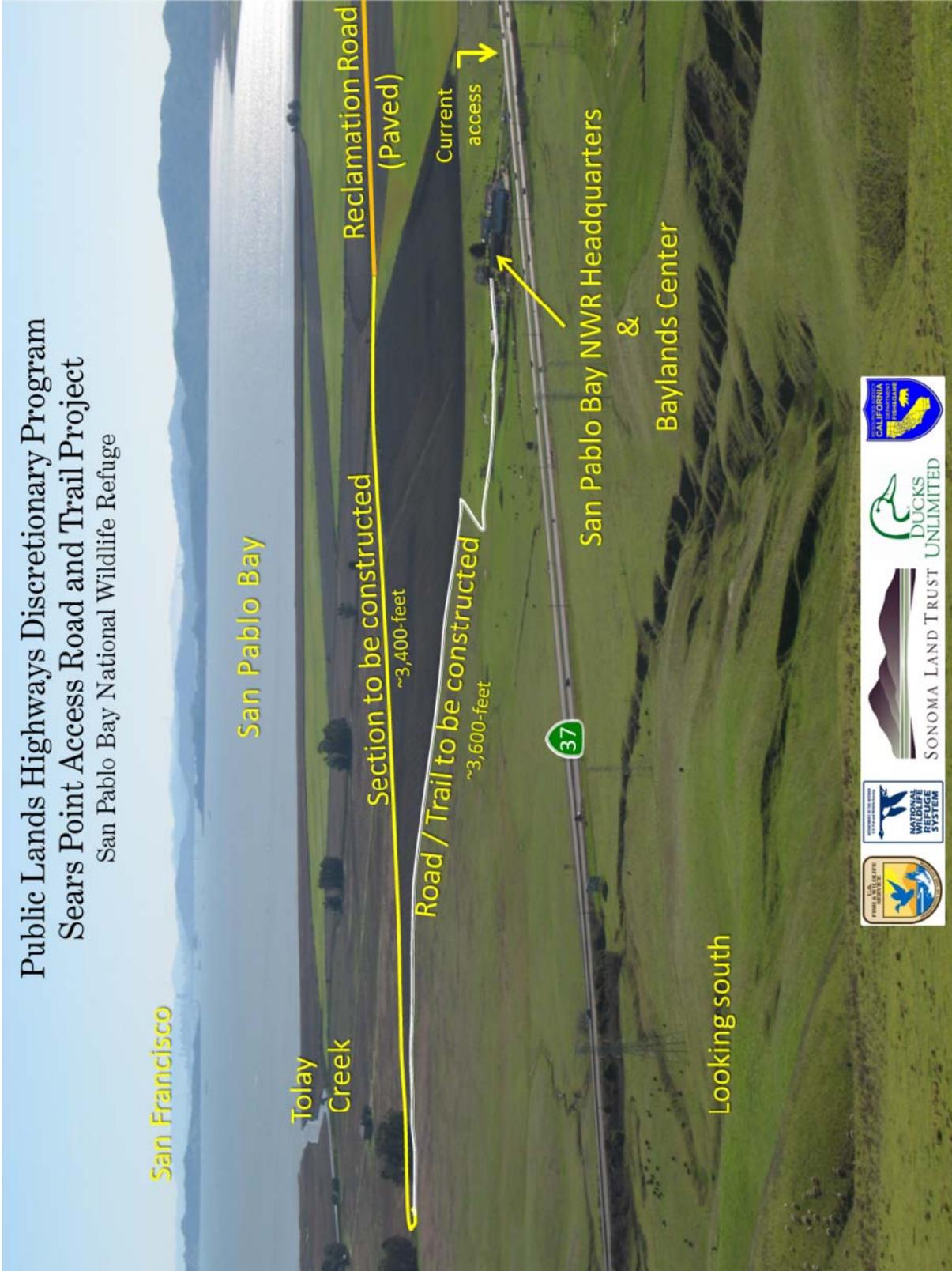


Figure 1. Looking south from Cougar Mountain over the proposed Sears Point Access Road & Trail Project for San Pablo Bay NWR. Current access is off State Route 37 as indicated. No acceleration or deceleration lanes exist making access unsafe for bus-loads of elementary students and refuge visitors. The proposed route will not only provide a far safer access, in addition, the route will provide for multi-modal access to the refuge and impending wetland restoration to begin in 2012. Public Lands Highways Discretionary Funds Program proposal, San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge, Sonoma County, California. May 2011.

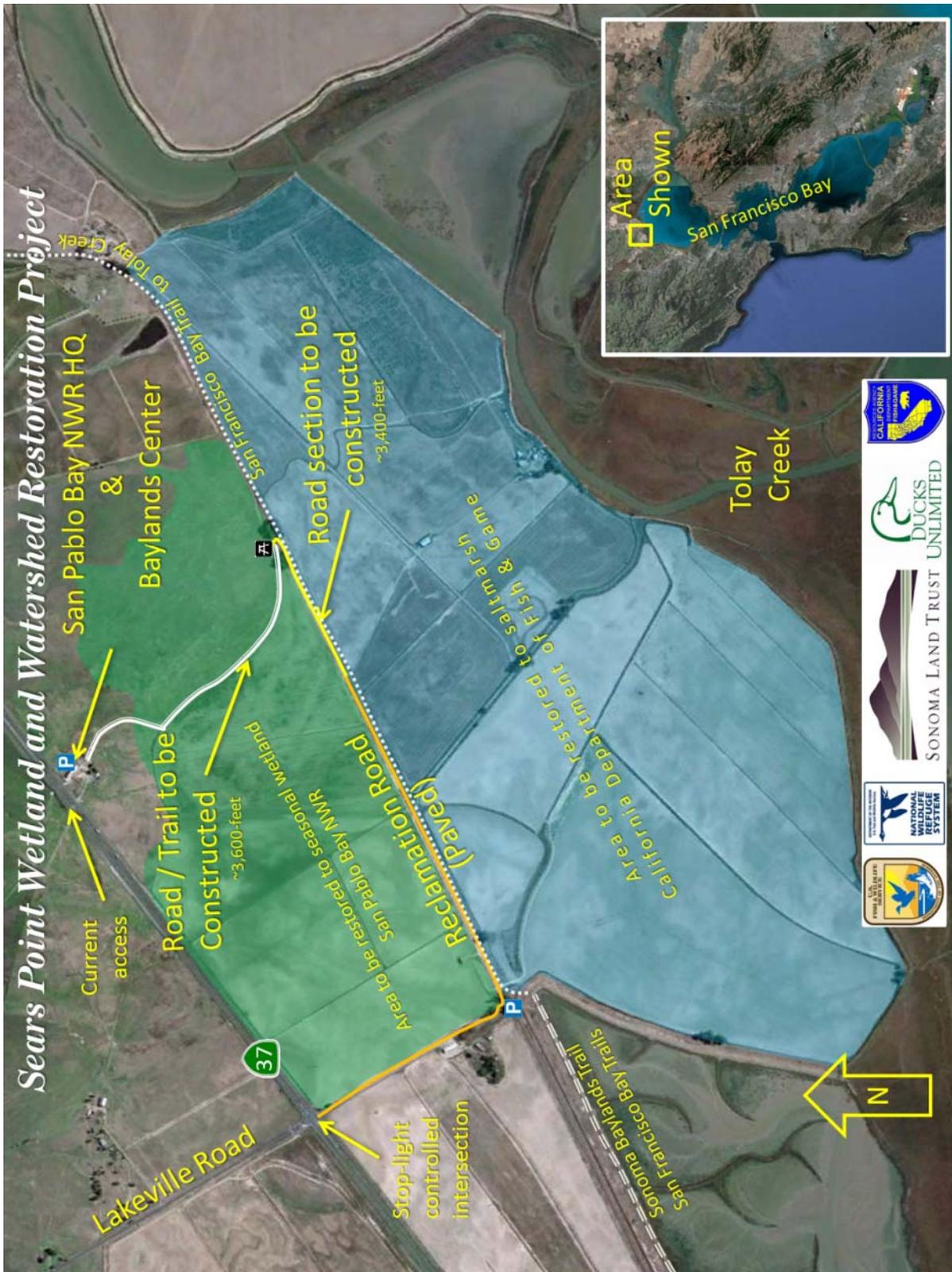


Figure 2. A simplified sketch of the *Sears Point Wetland and Watershed Restoration Project* with incorporation of the proposed *Sears Point Access Road & Trail Project* for San Pablo Bay NWR. The Sonoma Land Trust, in partnership with Ducks Unlimited, Fish & Game, and San Pablo Bay NWR, will construct the wetlands and convey them over to Fish & Game and the refuge. Construction is to begin in 2012. The proposed road and trail project will provide for safe multi-modal access to the refuge and the future wetlands. Additionally, the project will link to the San Francisco Bay Trails network. Public Lands Highways Discretionary Funds Program proposal, San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge, Sonoma County, California. May 2011. Refuge, Sonoma County, California. May 2011.