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**PUBLIC EDUCATION PROGRAM LAUNCHED
TO SHOWCASE BENEFITS OF INVESTING IN LAND, WATER AND PARKS
"CONSERVING CALIFORNIA" HIGHLIGHTS CONSERVATION SUCCESSES**

Sacramento, CA – With bond financing for most state projects frozen because of the budget crisis, a statewide public education program began today to remind Californians of the many benefits from their past investments in natural resources and to explain the continuing need to conserve land, water and parks for future generations.

The launch of a new website today and additional information in the weeks ahead will kick off an education program, entitled [Conserving California](#). The program will document and showcase dozens of successful conservation projects already financed with investments from the \$15.5 billion in water and conservation bonds Californians overwhelmingly approved since 2000.

The website provides regional and programmatic fact sheets describing projects around the state that were financed by the conservation measures, and a downloadable brochure explaining the program. With just four percent of the state's budget devoted to natural resources in the past, hundreds of projects around the state have relied on voter-approved financing.

"Over the past decade, voter-approved conservation bonds have made California a better place to live. These public investments have protected places that do so much for us – places that create cherished family memories, provide clean water to drink, and give our state's unparalleled wildlife a place to thrive," said Graham Chisholm, Executive Director of Audubon California. "These essential investments in California's land, water and parks make our economy stronger, enhance our environment and promote healthier lifestyles for our families."

Investments in conservation have increased and improved the state's vital water quality and supply, created urban and state parks that provide recreational opportunities to help families stay healthy and helped clean up California's rivers, coastal waters and beaches. California's investments also helped combat climate change and saved critical natural habitats, wildlife corridors and working landscapes.

"The work is not finished because California's resources continue to be threatened by population growth, toxic pollution, development and climate change," said Darla Guenzler, Executive Director of the California Council of

Land Trusts. “In a difficult economy, keeping Californians’ attention on protecting our natural resources is even more important because the benefits of conservation are too great to be ignored.”

For more information on Conserving California and to read about conservation successes throughout California, please visit our new web site, <http://www.conservingcalifornia.org>.

Conserving California is a public education program about our essential investments in land, water and parks presented by Audubon California, California Council of Land Trusts, Ocean Conservancy, The Nature Conservancy and WILD COAST.