



County of San Mateo

Inter-Departmental Correspondence

Department: COUNTY MANAGER: OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY

File #: 19-205

Board Meeting Date: 3/12/2019

Special Notice / Hearing: None
Vote Required: Majority

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors
From: Jim Eggemeyer, Director, Office of Sustainability
Subject: Agreement with San Mateo Resource Conservation District for implementation of the Butano Channel Restoration and Resilience Project

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a resolution authorizing an agreement with San Mateo Resource Conservation District for implementation of the Butano Channel Restoration and Resilience Project for the term of March 12, 2019 through March 1, 2022, in an amount not to exceed \$1,000,000.

BACKGROUND:

Pescadero Marsh Natural Preserve is the most significant outer coast estuary within 150 miles of coastline between Elkhorn Slough in Monterey County and Tomales Bay in Marin County. It is home to many state and federally listed threatened and endangered species.

Historical land use in the Butano Creek watershed has accelerated sedimentation and flooding in Pescadero, and the watershed is listed under the Clean Water Act as impaired by sediment. The historic channel of lower Butano Creek has completely filled in with sediment to the top of its banks within the marsh, and fish passage is blocked between the marsh and Butano Creek Watershed.

Under current conditions, Butano Creek cannot provide quality spawning and rearing habitat for fish, including threatened steelhead trout and Central California Coast Coho salmon. The community of Pescadero shares the pressing need to address sediment overwhelming the health of the marsh and increase the community's resilience to flood hazard and extreme weather events, which are increasing due to climate change.

DISCUSSION:

The Butano Channel Restoration and Resiliency Project (Project) will reduce flood risk for Pescadero while improving survival for native salmon and steelhead. The Project will restore the connectivity of Butano Creek to Pescadero lagoon to re-establish severely impaired fish passage between the marsh and the watershed and provide an escape route for fish from the lagoon during poor water quality conditions. The Project is designed to reduce the likelihood of fish kills by enhancing

circulation of freshwater and restoring marsh habitat to reduce water stagnation. It will be an essential component to a multi-faceted watershed scale restoration effort.

Furthermore, the Project will help to reduce flooding of the main road into Pescadero and adjacent properties. It will be a fundamental component of coordinated efforts to address the flooding hazard which has increased in frequency and duration and poses real adversity to public safety and economic conditions for Pescadero, even in small rain events.

The proposed Project is the lynchpin of the overall effort to restore Pescadero Marsh System. The Project will re-establish over a mile of the historic Butano Creek channel through Butano Marsh to the Pescadero Lagoon, remove 45,000 cubic yards of sediment that has aggraded in the historic channel, restore access to 10.1 miles of habitat for steelhead and Coho salmon, and reduce socio-economic impacts to the community of Pescadero due to flooding and associated road closures. Restoring capacity to the historic channel will help alleviate flooding of the road during 2-year storm events and the bridge during 10-year storm events.

County Counsel has reviewed and approved the agreement and resolution as to form.

Approval of this resolution contributes to the Shared Vision 2025 outcome of an Environmentally Conscious Community by building preparedness for the protection of ecosystems and people in the face of climate change.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The term of the agreement is March 12, 2019, to March 1, 2022, in an amount not to exceed \$1,000,000. The project is being funded by the County, California State Parks and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency through a Coastal Resiliency Grant. The County contribution is serving as a match requirement of the grant. This contract will be funded through the General Fund.