



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **County Receives \$750,000 Grant for Phase 2 of Marshall Wastewater Project**

**San Rafael, CA** – The Marin County Community Development Agency is pleased to announce that it has been awarded a \$750,000 grant for the second phase of the Marshall Community Wastewater System.

Beginning this past September, it seemed impossible that County staff and community leaders could work together to complete all of the necessary steps for the Clean Water Act Section 319(h) grant in time for the January 2012 application deadline. Those steps included a petition and election, and innumerable other formal actions by the Board of Supervisors. The result of this hard work and collaboration is a \$750,000 grant through the State Water Resources Control Board to fund half the cost of adding 20 homes and Tony's Restaurant to the existing Marshall Wastewater Project.

“For 14 years the complex Marshall Wastewater Project has been marked by outstanding teamwork between the County and the community, and in this case the partnership overcame an almost impossible deadline to be successful in this highly competitive grant program” noted County Supervisor Steve Kinsey. “Hats off to County staff and the Marshall residents who worked so hard.”

When human waste polluted oyster beds in 1998, public controversy erupted over the source of the pollution. After investigation, nearby Marshall homes were identified as the likely source of the pollution. After nearly 10 years of collaborative efforts on the part of the community and the County, an Environmental Impact Report was completed, and a “STEP” system with a community leach field was constructed in 2008 to serve 32 homes along the “Marshall Mile”. A Wastewater Disposal Zone was also formed to manage the project, and grants were received that funded half the construction cost. Residents within the Zone voted to assess themselves for the balance. Since a number of residents were left out of the project, the County made a commitment to the Marshall community that it would pursue a “Phase 2” of the project, which would serve approximately 20 homes to the South of the first phase.

“Due to the diligent work of Supervisor Kinsey’s office, in particular Liza Crosse, and the Marin County Environmental Health Division, along with the guidance and support of the Phase I participants and the quick response from members of Phase II, we are now prepared to implement the collective septic system for the southern Marshall community” added community member Chuck Edwards. “My sincere thanks to all involved.”

After reaching out to possible grant funders about the project, Marin County Environmental Health Specialist Robert Turner and Kinsey aide Liza Crosse received a call from Leslie Ferguson of the Regional Water Quality Control Board in early September. The agency’s encouragement galvanized a high-speed effort to meet the January deadline. This amount would cover half the cost of the Phase 2 project, and necessary steps included getting a community endorsement of the application, legally expanding the Wastewater Disposal Zone, and carrying out a formal election on an assessment for the remaining half of the project costs – all within an unheard of three months. Robert Turner credits the Phase 2 area residents with having the vision to vote to assess themselves. “It was quite a leap of faith for the community to vote almost unanimously for the assessment, because they had no guarantee that the other half of the project costs would be funded by the grant.” Becky Ng - Director of the County’s Environmental Health Division added: “This project is the next logical step in our efforts to both address water quality pollution and help property owners with the high cost of fixing septic systems, and we are delighted with this news.”

Over the next year the County will be working with the Regional Water Quality Control Board, pursuing contracts for the remaining funding, and hiring contractor(s) to carry out engineering, project design and obtain permits. The County envisions that bidding for construction will likely happen in the Summer of 2013, with construction starting in Fall, 2013.

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