

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY  
PLANNING DIVISION

June 16, 2015

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**SUBJECT: Report on Partnership with Marin Resource Conservation District to Implement the Urban Streams Coordination Program**

Dear Board Members,

**RECOMMENDATION:** Accept Report

**SUMMARY:**

This report is intended to provide your Board with a summary of the urban streams coordination program and its accomplishments over the past year.

In early 2014, your Board authorized an agreement with the Marin Resource Conservation District (MRCD) to implement an outreach and education program around stewardship of the County's streams and riparian corridors and allocated \$170,000 over the span of two years toward this effort. This program builds upon prior County initiatives, including the Salmon Enhancement Plan and a Landowner Assistance Program in San Geronimo. MRCD's urban streams coordination program would implement policies contained in the Countywide Plan that support education, including Policy BIO-4.12 which seeks to:

"Educate the public and County staff about the values, functions, and importance of riparian areas. Landowner education regarding the sensitivity of riparian corridors will be provided as part of the Natural Resource Information Program called for in Program BIO-1.c. An emphasis will be placed on public outreach to owners of developed properties encompassing or adjacent to Stream Conservation Areas where minimum setback distances are not provided. Information on regulations protecting riparian corridors should be available, together with general methods to minimize disturbance and improve habitat values."

The MRCD has a long, successful history of assisting landowners through education, conservation activities, and cooperative relationships. MRCD staff, Sarah Phillips, runs the program and works with County staff to implement goals that are summarized by the following three Es:

- **Education** During the past year, a number of informational fact sheets were developed on such topics as: emergency permitting processes, invasive non-native vegetation, eucalyptus-friendly plants, local native plant nurseries, creek-friendly engineers and contractors, and creek care guidance. Please refer to Attachments 3 to 7. Sarah has also organized an upcoming educational presentation with nationally-recognized Ann Riley with the Regional Water Quality Control Board and Eric Ettlinger with the Marin Municipal Water District to discuss salmonid habitat needs and how to properly restore eroding creek banks.
- **Engagement (Outreach)** Sarah has reached out to a multitude of stakeholders, regularly attending the monthly Marin Project Coordination meetings with regulatory agencies, and meetings with the Lagunitas Technical Advisory Committee and the North Bay Watershed Association. She assisted with salmon surveys, presented to community organizations, such as the San Geronimo Valley Stewards, and attended the Salmon Restoration Federation Conference in March.
- **Enhancement** Sarah assisted 40 property owners, at the owners' request, to look for ways to restore and enhance creekside habitat. Other activities that seek to improve the overall quality of streams and riparian areas include developing partnerships such as a work-trade program for residents to obtain native riparian vegetation to increase vegetative cover along streams.

Overall, the program has been well received by community organizations, public agencies, and residents and furthers the County's goals to protect, restore, and improve the County's watersheds and their riparian and natural systems through education. In the upcoming year, MRCDD plans to expand the urban streams coordination program by assisting watershed groups with creek clean-up events, organizing invasive non-native plant removal days, conducting hands-on resident workshops, scheduling several educational presentations, and continuing to conduct site visits upon request to provide educational materials targeted at the needs of the residents and their respected watersheds.

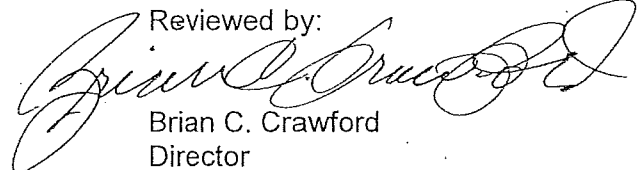
**FISCAL/STAFFING IMPACT:** Funding for this program is available in CDA's budget for the current fiscal year.

**REVIEWED BY:** (These boxes must be checked)

- |                          |                       |                                     |     |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|-----|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Department of Finance | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | N/A |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | County Counsel        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | N/A |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Human Resources       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | N/A |

Respectively submitted,

  
 Thomas Lai  
 Assistant Director

Reviewed by:  
  
 Brian C. Crawford  
 Director

- Attachments:
- (1) Monthly Reports (September to January, February, March, April)
  - (2) Comment Letters
    - (a) North Bay Watershed Association Letter, (5/1/15)
    - (b) Linda Gomez Email, (4/15/15)
    - (c) John Smithyman Email, (4/15/15)
    - (d) Donna Smith Letter, (6/5/15)
  - (3) Emergency Project Process
  - (4) Plants that grow among Eucalyptus Trees
  - (5) Non-native Invasive Plant Species (English Ivy and Japanese Knotweed)
  - (6) Local Native Plant Nurseries
  - (7) Creek Friendly Engineers, Contractors, Hydrologists and Geomorphologists