

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
PLANNING DIVISION

July 12, 2016

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

Dear Board Members,

RECOMMENDATION: Accept report and provide direction on options for potential program enhancements in FY 2016-17

SUMMARY:

This report provides a summary of the key accomplishments of the Urban Streams Coordination Program (USC) that is implemented by the Marin Resource Conservation District (MRCD) through a partnership with the County. The program emphasizes the preservation, restoration, and enhancement of the County's streams through outreach, education, and collaboration and provides technical and permit assistance to landowners. The program is staffed by Sarah Phillips, the Urban Streams Coordinator at the MRCD. A full summary of the program's accomplishments has been included in Attachment 1. Notable accomplishments over the past year include:

- Organized 12 watershed education meetings and presentations, including a presentation on rainwater harvesting at San Domenico School.
- Organized creek cleanup events for Sleepy Hollow Creek, Murphy Creek, and San Geronimo Creek, completed four weed removal events, and assisted the Miller Creek Watershed Stewards and the County's Flood Control District with development of a re-vegetation plan.
- Completed a number of fact sheets and brochures (including "Common Willows of Marin"), and assisted CDA with completion of the County's Landowner Resource Guide for streamside properties.
- Attended over 80 stakeholder/agency meetings and conducted over 130 site visits and communications with property owners.
- Participated in the Marin Project Coordination meetings with regulatory agencies, and with other stakeholder groups, such as the Lagunitas Technical Advisory Committee and the North Bay Watershed Association.

The USC program represents an effective model for community engagement and interagency coordination and has received overwhelming support from public agencies, community organizations, and residents. The program also implements one of three strategies endorsed by the Board of Supervisors for protecting Stream Conservation Areas through education and public outreach. The other two strategies include investment in County projects that benefit streams and their habitat, and adoption of an expanded Stream Conservation Area ordinance. Recently, the Board of Supervisors approved funding to extend the USC program and the County's partnership with the MRCD for two additional years (FY 2016-17 and 2017-18). In response to the Board's interest in options to strengthen the County's commitment to protect streams and riparian areas, staff has prepared the following two options for program enhancement for your Board's consideration:

Option 1: (Expand Urban Streams Program)

The first option would be to increase the County's investment in the USC program to fund a second, full-time position for the same two-year term as the current position, at a cost of approximately \$100,000 per year. The additional staff could expand the breadth of the program and complement the existing USC position by providing technical expertise with preparation of biological assessments, hydrologic analysis, and design to help owners meet permit requirements. The MRCD could assist by taking on the role of permittee for stream restoration projects. The additional staff could also work with regulatory agencies to remove permitting barriers and identify incentives to owners to undertake stream restoration projects, and seek grant funding for restoration.

Option 2: (Increase Investment in Stream Restoration/Enhancement)

This option would allocate additional funding to increase the County's investment in public restoration projects and work in conjunction with the USC program. One of the high priority recommendations from the Salmon Enhancement Plan is to remove instream barriers to fish migration. Since 2005, the County has invested over \$1.3 million countywide in the Fish Passage and Creek Restoration program. Ten projects are completed or under construction. There are currently three projects (all in San Geronimo Valley) that are awaiting funding, with a total estimated construction budget of approximately \$876,000. Should your Board select this option, staff would prepare funding options for your Board's review at a subsequent meeting.

FISCAL/STAFFING IMPACT: Funding for the existing USC program is available in CDA's budget for the current fiscal year. Should your Board provide direction regarding one of the options outlined above, staff would work with the County Administrator's office on proposed budget modifications for your consideration at a subsequent meeting.

REVIEWED BY: (These boxes must be checked)

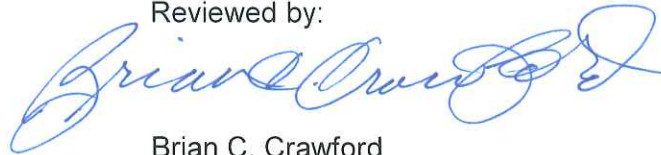
- Department of Finance [X] N/A
- County Counsel [X] N/A
- Human Resources [X] N/A

Respectively submitted,



Thomas Lai
Assistant Director

Reviewed by:



Brian C. Crawford
Director

Attachments:

- (1) Urban Streams Coordination Monthly Report (May 2016)
- (2) Agency/Organization Letters
 - (a) Marin Municipal Water District (4/29/16)
 - (b) Department of Fish and Wildlife (5/13/16, 5/23/16)
 - (c) Regional Water Quality Control Board (5/3/16, 5/13/16)
 - (d) National Marine Fisheries Service (5/18/16)
 - (e) Friends of Corte Madera Creek Watershed (4/30/16)
 - (f) Trout Unlimited (5/8/16)
 - (g) Lagunitas Creek Technical Advisory Committee (5/10/16)
 - (h) Gallinas Watershed Council (5/17/16)
 - (i) California Urban Streams Partnership (5/18/16)
 - (j) Marin Conservation League (5/12/16)
 - (k) San Geronimo Valley Planning Group (5/22/16)
 - (l) Watershed Alliance of Marin (5/24/16)
 - (m) Point Blue Conservation Science (5/26/16)
- (3) Individual Comments
 - (a) John Smithyman (4/28/16)
 - (b) Judith Champagne and Richard De Brito (4/30/16)
 - (c) Sarah Scott (5/2/16)
 - (d) Bonnie Monte (5/3/16)
 - (e) Ray Lorber (5/3/16)
 - (f) Fred Mundy (5/5/16)
 - (g) Linda Novy (5/6/16)
 - (h) Peg Shalen (5/7/16)
 - (i) Toni Littlejohn (5/8/16)
 - (j) Steve Tognini (5/11/16)
 - (k) Carole Garcia (5/15/16)
 - (l) Matt Smeltzer (5/16/16)
 - (m) Roberta Morganstern (5/16/16)
 - (n) Norma Fragoso (5/17/16)
 - (o) Sandy White (5/17/16)
 - (p) Pam Kanbayashi (5/18/16)
 - (q) Vincent Rogers (5/19/16)
 - (r) Marie-Louise Porti (5/20/16)
- (4) Common Willows of Marin County