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P.O. BOX 942849
SACRAMENTO, CA 94249-0097
(916) 319-3965



Assembly
California Legislature

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON
ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY AND TOXIC MATERIALS

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April 19, 2016

The Honorable Douglas Bosco
Chair, California Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 13th floor
Oakland, CA 94612

Re: SUPPORT for the Big Sur Land Trust's acquisition of a 73-acre property in the Carr Lake Basin of Salinas

Dear Chairman Bosco:

With this letter I want to indicate my support for the Big Sur Land Trust's longstanding work to acquire a 73-acre property in the Carr Lake Basin of Salinas.

Carr Lake holds immense potential to improve the well-being of Salinas residents. It has long been envisioned as an urban green space, parkland and restored riparian area. Modifying the landscape and restoring its waterways can also mitigate flood impacts to nearby residential areas.

It is my understanding that the City of Salinas also supports this project, and has recognized Carr Lake as a potential recreational centerpiece for the community in the Economic Development Element (EDE) of its General Plan. In 2013 the City of Salinas created the EDE to identify actions that would enable it to realize a vision of an economy that is prosperous, healthy, and environmentally sustainable. Moreover, the Big Sur Land Trust anticipates continuing a strong community engagement process, building on similar work in 2011, to assure that the voices of Salinas residents are central in determining a vision and establishing priorities for the long-term development of parklands in the Carr Lake Basin.

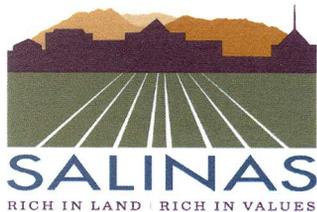
The opportunity to create more urban green spaces in Carr Lake is a great manifestation of land conservation in collaboration with diverse communities, including thousands of farm worker families living in areas near and adjacent to Carr Lake.

Thank you for your consideration of this worthy project, and we encourage your support.

Sincerely,

LUIS A. ALEJO
Assembly Member
30th District





City of Salinas

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR • 200 Lincoln Ave • Salinas, California 93901

(831) 758-7201 • (831) 758-7368 (Fax) • www.ci.salinas.ca.us

September 23, 2015

Samuel P. Schuchat, Executive Officer
California State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612-2530

Re: Support for the Big Sur Land Trust's Application to the California Coastal Conservancy

Dear Mr. Schuchat:

It is my pleasure to provide this letter of support for the Big Sur Land Trust's application to the California Coastal Conservancy for the acquisition of a property within Carr Lake in Salinas, California. Carr Lake lies in the center of the city. For over two decades, city leaders and community members have envisioned a multi-benefit project at the site with the potential to provide significant ecological, social and economic benefits at a local and regional scale including:

- expansion of public park land in the city;
- restoration of wetlands and floodwater detention areas that reduce flood impacts, improve water quality, create wildlife habitat, increase groundwater recharge, provide a source for recycled water, and support and enhance water conservation;
- trail connections to other city parks along the urban streams that converge at Carr Lake;
- trail connection to the city's largest recreational amenities and regional attraction; and
- an unprecedented opportunity to engage the local community in the development of the public spaces on site.

This project is a top priority for the city. The Big Sur Land Trust and the City of Salinas formalized a partnership in 2009 focused on the Carr Lake project. We believe this project represents an excellent match to the goals and objectives of the Coastal Conservancy.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, you may reach Gary Petersen, Director of Public Works at garyp@ci.salinas.ca.us or 831-758-7390.

Sincerely,

Joe Gunter, Mayor
City of Salinas

cc: Ray Corpuz, City Manager
Chris Callihan, City Attorney
Gary Petersen, Director of Public Works



City of Salinas

Public Works Department - Engineering and Transportation
200 Lincoln Avenue ♦ Salinas, California ♦ 93901 ♦ (831) 758-7241

September 23, 2015

Rachel Saunders, Director of Conservation
Big Sur Land Trust
509 Hartnell Street
P.O. Box 4071
Monterey, CA 93942

RE: SUPPORT FOR THE BIG SUR LAND TRUST'S APPLICATION TO THE CALIFORNIA COASTAL CONSERVANCY

This is a letter of support for the Big Sur Land Trust's application to the California Coastal Conservancy related to floodplain impacts/benefits at Carr Lake. Robert Russell is the designated Floodplain Administrator for the City as appointed under Salinas City Code (SCC) Section 9-52.1.(u), and as the City's Traffic Engineer as authorized in SCC Section 20-14.

Securing Carr Lake land and utilizing it for a combination of recreation, flood control, water quality, and traffic circulation needs of the City is clearly identified in several City policies and documents, including the following:

2002 General Plan (GP) Policies:

1. *The 2002 City General Plan (GP) designates Carr Lake as 439.66 acres for Future Parks and Recreational Facilities (Table COS-4 and Figure COS-7);*
2. *Said GP also designates the area to accommodate two streets running through this property, south of East Laurel Drive. (Projects 33 and 34) to accommodate General Plan Buildout traffic needs as part of the City's Circulation Master Plan/Element (Table C-4 and Figure C-5 of the GP). The circulation system includes bicycle/pedestrian facilities, per the 2002 City's Bikeways Plan and 2004 Pedestrian Plan and are also included in the City's Traffic Fee Ordinance (TFO);*
3. *From a safety perspective, securing any of the Carr Lake land for continued flood storage and maintaining the passage of runoff from lower flow storms through the existing agricultural lands to Reclamation Ditch #1665 is consistent with City GP Policies S-4.4, and S-4.5 (retaining stormwater retention capacity by maintaining open space for flood storage and detention);*
4. *Securing any of the land for floodplain management is also consistent with the Confidential Draft Carr Lake Floodplain Modification Analysis, dated June 2007, as prepared by RBF Consulting; an analysis prepared to identify how to better manage stormwater runoff flowing into Carr Lake; and*

5. *Utilizing Carr Lake for water quality treatment meets several GP Conservation/Open Space (COS) element policies, and addresses the City's Stormwater Development Standards/NPDES permit, as well;*

FEMA rules/regulations would preclude filling any designated areas currently within the designated "floodway" without compensating for the fill in the same general floodway area. Thus, a "balance" within the greater Carr Lake area must be maintained.

The City of Salinas looks forward to working with the Big Sur Land Trust and other stakeholders to design a trail system that identifies and addresses any constraints and challenges early in the planning process.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED



Gary E. Petersen, C.A.E.
Salinas Public Works Director



Robert C. "Rob" Russell, P.E.
Salinas City Engineer



**BUILDING
HEALTHY
COMMUNITIES**
EAST SALINAS

Building Healthy Communities - East Salinas

606 Williams Road • Salinas, CA 93905 • P (831) 717-1384 • Fax (831) 975-4768

September 25, 2015

Samuel P. Schuchat, Executive Officer
California State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612-2530

Dear Mr. Schuchat:

On behalf of the Building Healthy Communities Initiative (BHC) East Salinas, we want to express our strong support for the Big Sur Land Trust's work to acquire the Ikeda Property in the Carr Lake basin of Salinas and for their application to the California State Coastal Conservancy for acquisition funding.

East Salinas, located adjacent to Carr Lake, is one of 14 communities statewide identified by The California Endowment for its BHC initiative. BHC is designed to improve the health and safety of east Salinas residents -- and get them a place at the table in shaping the future of their city. BHC works as a conduit for collaboration among dozens of groups working with youth and families where they live to build community and institutional changes that will result in positive environmental, education, social, and economic outcomes.

BHC East Salinas has strongly advocated for the conversion of Carr Lake into a regional park. We believe that Carr Lake holds tremendous potential to address community needs for parkland and safe green spaces and to improve the well-being of East Salinas residents. We understand that it has been envisioned as parkland and restored riparian corridors for decades and that modifying the landscape and restoring its waterways can also serve to mitigate flood impacts to nearby residential areas.

Community engagement and leadership development, especially among youth, is at the heart of what we do and we look forward to working with the Big Sur Land Trust and other community advocates to ensure that the people who live in the neighborhoods adjacent to Carr Lake play a central role in the design of this community conservation project.

We strongly urge the Coastal Conservancy's support for the Big Sur Land Trust's Ikeda Property acquisition at Carr Lake. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Andrea Manzo
Hub Manager



September 25, 2015

Samuel P. Schuchat, Executive Officer
California State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612-2530

Dear Mr. Schuchat:

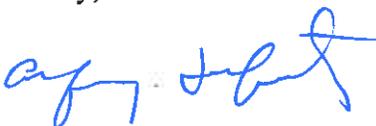
On behalf of CHISPA, the Community Housing Improvement and Planning Systems Association, I want to express my enthusiastic support for the Big Sur Land Trust's work to acquire the Ikeda Property in the Carr Lake basin of Salinas. CHISPA is the largest private, nonprofit housing developer based in Monterey County. Since its incorporation in 1980, CHISPA has built and renovated 2,268 single-family homes and apartments for low and moderate-income people in Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz Counties.

Carr Lake holds immense potential to improve the well-being of Salinas residents. It has been envisioned as parkland and restored riparian corridors for decades. Modifying the landscape and restoring its waterways can also mitigate flood impacts to nearby residential areas. In 2011 the Big Sur Land Trust facilitated community conversations to help inform planning related to potential urban green spaces, parklands and riparian corridors. That most recent planning involved four community workshops with more than 40 residents involved from neighborhoods surrounding Carr Lake, and built upon other Carr Lake vision plans dating back to 2003.

The conceptual design and community conversation report from 2011 will serve as foundational documents for a robust community engagement and design process that the Big Sur Land Trust will spearhead with community partners, including CHISPA, once site control has been achieved with support from the Coastal Conservancy and others.

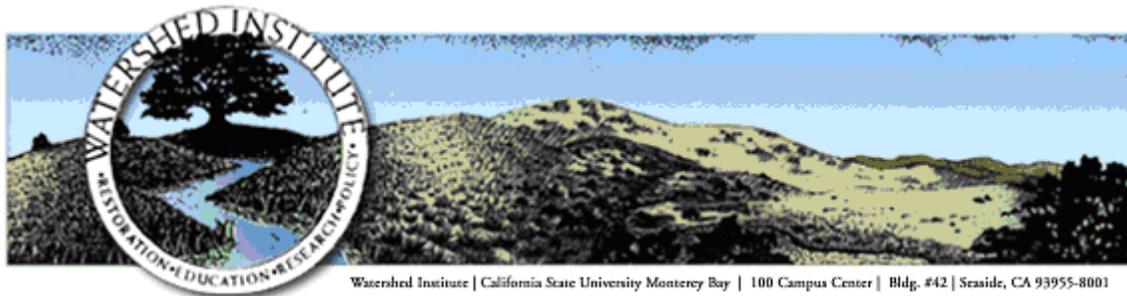
Please note that I am a member of the Board of Trustees of the Big Sur Land Trust in order to most fully support and contribute to its work to benefit communities throughout Monterey County. The Carr Lake project is an exciting manifestation of conservation in collaboration with diverse communities, including thousands of farm worker families in Salinas, many of whom have long been served by CHISPA. I urge your support for the Ikeda Property acquisition at Carr Lake. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Alfred Diaz-Infante
President/CEO

Exhibit 3: Project Letters



September 25, 2015

Samuel P. Schuchat, Executive Officer
California State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612-2530

Dear Mr. Schuchat:

On behalf of Watershed Institute, I am writing to voice support for the Big Sur Land Trust's application to the Coastal Conservancy for the acquisition of a property within Carr Lake in Salinas, California. The Watershed Institute has been in partnership with the Big Sur Land Trust and the City of Salinas for over 15 years working on this signature project that will result in "parklands for the people who feed a nation." In that time, the Watershed Institute's Return of the Natives Restoration Education Project has involved over 25,000 Salinas children/youth/residents and CSUMB students in the creation of creekside parks which empty into Carr Lake. We are thrilled that Coastal Conservancy funding may make the next step into the restoration of Carr Lake itself possible.

This first piece of acquisition of 73 acres of the historic Carr Lake will lead to the creation of a project that will benefit Salinas, our region, and indeed the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary in numerous ways. Salinas will gain urban green space, trail networks will connect the City, new recreational sites will be possible, and the City will have a "green" heart at its center. Wetlands will be restored, groundwater recharge will improve, wildlife habitat will be created and the water quality of the entire watershed that flows to the Bay will significantly improve.

Very few existing large cities ever have the opportunity to site significant parklands in their centers, and Coastal Conservancy funding of this Big Sur Land Trust application will make real a dream for Salinas that started in the 1970s and which will finally come to reality. Help Salinas to "believe in itself."

On behalf of the Watershed Institute of CSU Monterey Bay, I strongly support the grant application of the Big Sur Land Trust. Please encourage your staff to call upon me at 831-582-3689 or lilienk@csumb.edu for additional information.

Sincerely,

Laura Lee Lienk
Co-Director, Watershed Institute, CSU Monterey Bay