

COASTAL CONSERVANCY

Staff Recommendation
June 1, 2023

**REDWOOD NATIONAL AND STATE PARK VISITOR CENTER AND RESTORATION PROJECT –
PHASE 4 RESTORATION IMPLEMENTATION**

Project No. 14-055-05
Project Manager: Su Corbaley

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Authorization to disburse up to \$6,961,872 of funds from National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and up to \$3,711,683 of Conservancy funds as follows: up to \$8,025,640 to the Yurok Tribe and up to \$2,177,555 to California Trout, Inc. to restore approximately 15.9 acres of riparian habitat on lower Prairie Creek as part of the Redwood National and State Park Visitor Center and Restoration Project at the former Orick Mill A site in Humboldt County, and \$470,360 to the Yurok Tribe to plan for the continuation of similar restoration activities upstream in Prairie Creek and its tributaries.

LOCATION: 1.5 miles north of Orick, Humboldt County

EXHIBITS

- Exhibit 1: [Project Location Maps](#)
 - Exhibit 2: [Restoration Implementation Phases](#)
 - Exhibit 3: [Proposed Phase 4 Activities](#)
 - Exhibit 4: [Redwood National and State Park Visitor Center and Restoration Project Components](#)
 - Exhibit 5: [Past and Current Site Conditions](#)
 - Exhibit 6: [November 10, 2022 Technical Memorandum – Greenhouse Gas Analysis of Use of Curtain Burner](#)
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RESOLUTION AND FINDINGS

Staff recommends that the State Coastal Conservancy adopt the following resolution and findings.

Resolution:

The State Coastal Conservancy hereby authorizes two grants, totaling an amount not to exceed \$10,673,555 (ten million six hundred seventy-three thousand, five hundred fifty-five dollars) collectively, to the Yurok Tribe and California Trout, Inc. (“the grantees”) to construct elements

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of the Redwood National and State Park Visitor Center and Restoration Project at the former Orick Mill A site in Humboldt County as follows, subject to adjustment between the grantees by the Executive Officer: up to \$8,025,640 (eight million twenty-five thousand six hundred forty dollars) to the Yurok Tribe and up to \$2,177,555 (two million one hundred seventy-seven thousand five hundred fifty-five dollars) to California Trout, Inc. for the implementation of riparian and fish habitat restoration projects on lower Prairie Creek; and further authorizes a grant of up to \$470,360 (four hundred seventy thousand, three hundred sixty dollars) to the Yurok Tribe to conduct planning for additional riparian and floodplain restoration upstream in Prairie Creek and its tributaries.

Prior to commencement of the project, the grantees shall submit for the review and written approval of the Executive Officer of the Conservancy (Executive Officer) the following:

1. A detailed work program, schedule, and budget.
2. Names and qualifications of any contractors to be retained in carrying out the project.
3. A plan for acknowledgement of Conservancy funding.
4. Evidence that all permits and approvals required to implement the project have been obtained.
5. Evidence that the grantees have entered into agreements sufficient to enable the grantees to implement, operate, and maintain the project.

In carrying out the project, the grantees shall comply with all applicable mitigation and monitoring measures identified in the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Redwood National and State Park Visitor Center and Restoration Project and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program adopted by the Conservancy on September 3, 2020 and comply with all measures and conditions that are required by any permit or approval. The grantees shall comply with all applicable terms and conditions imposed by the grants to the Conservancy.

Findings:

Based on the accompanying staff recommendation and attached exhibits, the State Coastal Conservancy hereby finds that:

1. The proposed authorization is consistent with Chapter 6 of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code, regarding enhancement of coastal resources.
2. The proposed project is consistent with the current Conservancy Project Selection Criteria.
3. California Trout, Inc. is a nonprofit organization organized under section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

PROJECT SUMMARY:

Staff recommends the Conservancy authorize disbursement of \$6,961,872 of funds to be received by the Conservancy from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and up to \$3,711,638 of Conservancy funds as follows: \$8,025,640 to the Yurok Tribe and \$2,177,555 to California Trout, Inc. (Caltrout) to restore approximately 15.9 acres of riparian habitat on lower Prairie Creek, as part of the Redwood National and State Park Visitor Center and Restoration Project, at the former Orick Mill A site in Humboldt County, and \$470,360 to the Yurok Tribe to plan for additional riparian and floodplain restoration upstream in Prairie Creek and its tributaries. The division of grant amounts between the Yurok Tribe and Caltrout is subject to adjustment by the Executive Officer as restoration design plans are advanced from 65% to final designs. The authorization would fund a subset of restoration activities of the Prairie Creek Floodplain Restoration Project (PCFRP), a component of the larger Redwood National and State Park Visitor Center and Restoration Project. In this staff report, this subset of habitat restoration activities is referred to as “the project” or “the proposed project”, while the larger Redwood National and State Park Visitor Center and Restoration Project is referred to as the “RNSPVCR Project”.

This authorization would provide 75% of the funds needed for the proposed project, which is Phase 4 of the PCFRP. Conservancy staff, with support from project partner and landowner Save the Redwoods League (League), have submitted a pre-proposal to the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) for the remaining \$3,711,683 needed for Phase 4. WCB staff have been supportive of the Conservancy applying for Phase 4 funding.

In 2022, Conservancy staff applied to the NOAA Transformational Habitat Restoration Grant Program for funds to complete final designs for and implement Phase 4 restoration actions on 15.9 acres of the RNSPVCR Project site, and to begin supplemental planning for future restoration on the upstream reaches of Prairie Creek. In January 2023, NOAA notified Conservancy staff that its application was selected for award. Staff is recommending Conservancy authorization to disburse NOAA grant funds and Conservancy funds to Caltrout and the Yurok Tribe.

Authorizing funds to two grantees facilitates several efficiencies: 1) the Yurok Tribe will continue to supply its all-Yurok construction crew, focusing its efforts on implementation of the restoration work; 2) Caltrout will continue to support the project by preparing final restoration construction documents, coordinating construction management, providing scheduling and regulatory compliance oversight and revegetation management, convening technical advisory and restoration team meetings, and serving as the outreach and public information liaison for the project; and 3) granting directly to the Yurok Tribe rather than through Caltrout avoids redundant management and administration for invoicing and streamlines payments to reduce the timeline for reimbursements to the Tribe.

The project is in northern Humboldt County (Exhibit 1) on the site of the former Orick Mill A, a timber mill which operated from 1960-2009 and was demolished in 2010, leaving 21 acres of asphalt, concrete mill foundations, a large berm for flood protection of the mill site, and remnant road prisms all along a heavily incised section of Prairie Creek, primarily located adjacent to Highway 101. The 125-acre mill site was a high priority acquisition for the League,

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National Park Service (NPS), and California Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks) due to its adjacency to Redwood National and State Park (RNSP), its proximity to both Orick and Highway 101, and the restoration potential of the site. The property was purchased by the League in 2013 with the vision of creating a new southern gateway to RNSP to facilitate public access, education, and cultural enrichment for the Yurok tribal members through stewardship of their ancestral lands. The property was also acquired to enable the restoration of Prairie Creek and its floodplain to restore connectivity, provide high quality habitat, enhance climate resilience for the recovery of listed salmonids and other special-status species, and enhance ecosystem function and resilience. Transfer of the property to NPS for inclusion in RNSP is planned for early 2026, following completion of restoration implementation and construction by the League of a trails gateway providing recreational connections to RNSP.

Prairie Creek Floodplain Restoration Project Phase 4 is the final effort of a multi-phased stream channel and floodplain restoration project – carried out over five construction seasons – that builds on Conservancy, NOAA, and League investments since 2015, for restoration planning and implementation (Exhibit 2). Phase 1 was completed in 2021 and included the installation of 1.5 acres of low flow, backwater habitat, revegetated with native riparian plants. Phase 2, begun in 2021, is ongoing and to date has removed 12 of the 21 acres of legacy asphalt from the mill operations. Phase 3 commenced in 2022 and includes the restoration of 11.5 acres of riparian habitat, installation of 2 acres of backwater habitat, installation of a new 800-foot creek channel (to facilitate moving the current Prairie Creek flows away from Highway 101), and grading of the future Yurok Village Site. Phase 4 (this request) will complete the restoration and create a new split channel to restore and enhance 2,233 feet of stream and backwater for Prairie Creek, restore 15.9 acres of wetland and riparian habitat, and connect to the new channel constructed in Phase 3 (Exhibit 3 shows the elements of Phase 4). Once all four phases are complete, the Prairie Creek Floodplain Restoration Project will have restored and enhanced 0.9 instream miles and approximately 29.8 acres of floodplain in lower Prairie Creek. In addition, this project sets the stage for future work in this critical watershed through an assessment of floodplain connectivity along the upstream reaches of Prairie Creek to identify restoration opportunities and present priorities for advanced planning and implementation at three sites. Prairie Creek upstream of the former mill site primarily lies within RNSP and within protected old growth parkland, yet there are also former logging tracts with dense, second-growth conifer forests currently undergoing restoration to remove non-native conifer species and re-establish a healthy redwood ecosystem. There are impacts from historic industrial logging practices that are still felt on the landscape particularly by rearing juvenile salmon— with sections of Prairie Creek and its tributaries that are incised, lack habitat complexity, and are disconnected from the historic floodplain. The proposed planning work will identify opportunities to heal the landscape from the scars of industrial timber activities.

Prairie Creek is the largest tributary to Redwood Creek, and is a cold-water salmon stronghold and climate refuge because of the protected redwood ecosystem that delivers cool water year-round, providing habitat for upwards of 80% of the Redwood Creek population of coho. However, certain sections of Prairie Creek (such as the project reach) have significant legacy land use issues that require restoration to improve habitat quality. The former mill site has been heavily degraded by the lumber industry, approximately 100 years of agricultural use of

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the floodplain, and highway and road construction. Of all the project phases, the Phase 4 footprint contains the most heavily degraded habitat from these varied impacts.

The Redwood/Prairie Creek populations of federally threatened coho salmon, Chinook salmon, and steelhead are critical for recovery of the species; once lower Prairie Creek is restored, it will be an anchor for cold water persistence and salmon recovery on the West Coast.

In 2015 and 2017, the Conservancy granted funds to the League to conduct community outreach, design and seek permits for the restoration project, develop a conceptual trail plan, and complete the necessary environmental documents for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Protection Act. Concurrently, the League funded designs for the future visitor center and for the initial public access improvements that would make the site available for public use pending transfer to NPS for construction of the future visitor center. In 2018, the restoration, trails, and visitor center projects were integrated into the single RNSPVCR Project with the Conservancy taking the lead agency role for CEQA compliance. In 2021 the Conservancy authorized disbursement of \$1,239,000 for construction of Phase 1 of the PCFRP including the installation of a 1.5-acre backwater feature and restoration of 3 acres of upland riparian habitat. In 2022, the Conservancy authorized disbursement of \$5,602,136 of grant funds from the Wildlife Conservation Board and the Ocean Protection Council, and \$500,000 from Save the Redwoods League for Phase 3 restoration implementation including the restoration of 11.5 acres of riparian habitat and installation of a new 800-foot new creek channel.

The RNSPVCR Project is the result of more than six years of planning that began in 2015 to develop designs to rehabilitate the former mill site into a visitor center and to restore critical salmonid habitat on Prairie Creek. The RNSPVCR Project includes infrastructure, recreation enhancements, and habitat restoration elements to increase recreation and public educational opportunities, provide regional trail connections, restore hydrological connections and floodplain habitat, and improve habitat for native plants, fish, and wildlife. As shown in Exhibit 4, the RNSPVCR Project comprises six major components: 1) Visitor Center; 2) California Coastal Trail; 3) Canopy Walkway; 4) Yurok Village Site; 5) Prairie Creek Floodplain Restoration; and 6) Libby Creek Enhancement. The proposed project for this authorization focuses on Phase 4 of the PCFRP.

The PCFRP component is a collaboration between the Conservancy, the League, NPS, State Parks, CalTrout, NOAA, and the Yurok Tribe. The League is leading the effort to construct the Trails Gateway and the California Coastal Trail/Libby Creek components of the RNSPVCR Project. Construction of the gateway and trail will provide the visiting public and local community with recreation opportunities adjacent to the restored Prairie Creek and to connect with the surrounding RNSP. The NPS hopes to create a new RNSP visitor center on the property once it is under their ownership, and transform the property into a world-class visitor gateway at the southern end of RNSP, home to the world's tallest trees.

Natural resources and permitting agencies, the local Orick community, and the Yurok Tribe have been integral participants throughout the planning of the project. The Yurok Tribe is the grantee for restoration construction activities and regional businesses provide services and supplies to the project. Permitting for the RNSPVCR Project is complete. Final construction

designs for the proposed project will be completed with the proposed authorization and will fully incorporate any applicable mitigation measures from the CEQA document, and any permit conditions.

Site Description: The 125-acre RNSPVCR Project site was formerly the location of a sawmill (Orick Mill A). Along with remnants of the mill development, which has been investigated for toxics and determined to be clean by the North Coast Regional Quality Control Board, the site contains pastureland, and wetland and forest habitats. The site is owned by the League and located near the unincorporated town of Orick in Humboldt County in Yurok Ancestral Territory. It is located at the downstream end of Prairie Creek, along the mile of Prairie Creek immediately above the confluence with Redwood Creek. Together these drainages form the Redwood Creek watershed. Much of the Prairie Creek subwatershed and the lower third of the Redwood Creek watershed before the confluence with Prairie Creek are located within RNSP, which contains two of the world’s largest remaining old-growth redwood forests. Thousands of acres of RNSP-managed property lie immediately east of the project, while Bald Hills Road borders on the south and Highway 101 on the west.

RNSP is designated a World Heritage Site and part of the California Coast Range Biosphere Reserve, designations that reflect worldwide recognition of the park’s natural resources as irreplaceable. The flyway for the largest intact population of the federally threatened Marbled Murrelet occurs over the property and Roosevelt Elk forage on site. Otters, beaver, black bears, great blue herons, deer, and coyotes are known to frequent the site, and coho salmon, chinook, steelhead trout, and cutthroat utilize Prairie Creek, as do amphibians including the California red-legged frog.

Legacy conditions from the mill operations at the RNSPVCR Project site included 21 acres of asphalt, an old housing site on compacted fill, grazing pastures, a deeply incised stream channel with 10-foot high nearly vertical or failing banks, levees and disconnected floodplains, and two former logging haul roads.

Following the first two years of restoration construction, the site now includes a 1.5-acre backwater pond, a new 880-foot long channel meander that, when connected, will remove stream flows away from Highway 101, approximately 8 acres of restored floodplain and riparian habitat, and 12 fewer acres of asphalt and foundations (Exhibit 5). Monthly post-construction fish sampling has documented young coho salmon and cutthroat trout using the newly installed features. In February 2023, 86 coho were documented including two from upstream Prairie Creek and one is known to have migrated 22 miles south from the Klamath River system.

Grant Applicant Qualifications: Each grantee brings extensive experience at Prairie Creek to complete their respective actions for this authorization. Caltrout was the key contractor to the landowner Save the Redwoods League for restoration planning, community outreach, environmental and permitting review, and for construction scheduling and management oversight of the first construction season. Caltrout is the grantee for the ongoing Phase 3 restoration. The Yurok Tribe (a federally recognized tribe) is the restoration construction lead. It successfully completed the first construction season in fall 2021 and the first season of Phase 3 construction. Both entities have successfully managed Conservancy funding for multiple salmonid restoration planning and implementation projects in Humboldt County. Restoration

will continue through 2025. The League expects to transfer the property to NPS in 2026. NPS and the League have executed an agreement that outlines a commitment of joint stewardship of the restored site for a period of 10 years following transfer to NPS.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY’S PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA:

The proposed project is consistent with the Conservancy’s Project Selection Criteria, last updated on September 23, 2021, in the following respects:

Selection Criteria

1. Extent to which the project helps the Conservancy accomplish the objectives in the Strategic Plan.

See the “Consistency with Conservancy’s Strategic Plan” section below.

2. Project is a good investment of state resources.

This project is a good investment of state resources because restoration of stream-floodplain connectivity and enhancement of critical salmon habitat on Prairie Creek will benefit the populations of coho salmon, chinook, and steelhead trout in the Redwood Creek watershed in northern California. Restoration of these salmonid populations is a statewide priority.

3. Project includes a serious effort to engage tribes. Examples of tribal engagement include good faith, documented efforts to work with tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated to the project area.

The Yurok Tribe has been a core partner since project inception, with representatives participating in the planning and design for all project elements. The League has presented the project objectives to the Yurok Tribal Council and Culture Committee numerous times, seeking input and inviting collaboration; this resulted in the Yurok taking a key role in the restoration and visitor center planning, the development of interpretive designs and a Yurok Village Site component of the project, and ultimately in participating in project implementation as the restoration construction team.

4. Project benefits will be sustainable or resilient over the project lifespan.

The project is designed to restore natural processes in lower Prairie Creek. Once the restoration work is complete the streams will be self-sustaining. The project is not in an area threatened by sea level rise but by restoring the creek channel and floodplain and enhancing the riparian cover, the project will provide fish and terrestrial species refuge from downstream and downslope habitat that may be negatively affected by climate change.

5. Project delivers multiple benefits and significant positive impact.

The project will provide multiple benefits. The project will provide direct economic benefits to the town of Orick and the Yurok Tribe, both designated as Severely Disadvantaged Communities. These benefits will come during construction of the project, as local contractors and materials suppliers have job and workforce development opportunities, and particularly to the Yurok Tribe as the key construction crew for restoration. Additional economic benefits will

result from increased visitor numbers as recreational and educational opportunities are added in the area. Additionally, the project directly supports the federal and state goals of helping restore endangered salmonids.

6. Project planned with meaningful community engagement and broad community support.

There has been extensive community engagement with key stakeholders including the residents of the small community of Orick, the Yurok Tribe, and local, state, and federal agencies. During the conceptual planning phase, seven stakeholder meetings were held, and input was incorporated into project designs. The purpose of these stakeholder meetings was to introduce the project and seek meaningful input to develop a project scope that would restore salmonid and terrestrial wildlife habitat, develop a trails system for public access to the property and the larger RNSP network, and improve safe active transportation for the local community by developing an off-highway bike path. Concurrently, the League held public meetings specifically with the Orick community, inviting them to provide input on what it would take to reshape the former mill site into a world class visitor center that would maximize local community benefits. These meetings enabled all stakeholders to shape the RNSPVCR Project for improved habitat values and future public uses to benefit the community by bolstering health and providing local jobs and business opportunities related to expanded tourism. In November 2022, the League hosted an open house for the public to visit the site. Approximately 120 members of the public attended.

The proposed project has garnered wide community support, including from Humboldt County Board of Supervisors, Orick Chamber of Commerce, Orick Community Services District, Redwood National Park, Senator Mike McGuire, and Assemblymember Jim Wood. Congressman Jared Huffman and his staff have toured the project site.

PROJECT FINANCING

Coastal Conservancy	\$3,711,683
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (via a grant to the Conservancy)	\$6,961,872
Total Authorization	\$10,673,555
Anticipated Additional Future Phase 4 funding (via Outside State or Federal Grants)	\$3,711,683
Project Total	\$14,385,238

A portion of the proposed funds for Phase 4 restoration is anticipated to come from a FY 2022/23 appropriation to the Conservancy from the General Fund for the purpose of climate resilience (Budget Act of 2022, SB 154 (2022)). These funds are available as described in Section 52 of Chapter 258 of the Statutes of 2021, which sets forth a detailed description of the purposes of the climate resilience funds. The proposed project is consistent with this funding

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source because it will enhance the ecosystem function of a coastal watershed to increase climate resilience for the recovery of listed salmonids and other special-status species.

A portion of the proposed funds for Phase 4 restoration includes \$7,000,000 in grant funds expected to be awarded to the Conservancy from the 2022 NOAA Transformational Habitat Restoration Grant Program. Those funds will be distributed as follows: \$6,491,512 will be used by Caltrout and the Yurok Tribe for Phase 4 implementation; \$470,360 will be used by the Yurok Tribe for the upstream supplemental planning activity; and SCC will retain \$38,128 for staff to administer the grants to the Yurok Tribe and Caltrout.

The \$7,000,000 NOAA grant is under final upper-level review with the NOAA Grants Management Division and is expected to have a start date of June 1, 2023. The Conservancy staff recommendation to authorize disbursement of these funds would typically occur after the granting agency's final action. However, the next Conservancy meeting following the start date of the NOAA grant is not until September 2023 and waiting until then for Conservancy authorization to disburse NOAA funds would result in missing the 2023 construction season for Phase 4, causing a one-year construction delay. The League intends to transfer ownership and management responsibility of the property to NPS by 2026. Any delays in construction could delay the transfer and opening the site to the public. Conservancy authorization of the recommended funding will position the Conservancy and the grantees to begin construction activities as soon as the NOAA funds are in place at the Conservancy.

Conservancy staff have submitted a pre-proposal to the Wildlife Conservation Board for the remaining \$3,711,683 needed for Phase 4.

Unless specifically identified as "Required Match," the other sources of funding and in-kind contributions described above are estimates. The Conservancy does not typically require matching funds or in-kind services, nor does it require documentation of expenditures from other funders or of in-kind services. Typical grant conditions require grantees to provide any funds needed to complete a project.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S ENABLING LEGISLATION:

The proposed funding authorization is consistent with Chapter 6 (Sections 31251-31270) of the Conservancy's enabling legislation, Division 21 of the Public Resources Code regarding the enhancement of coastal resources.

Pursuant to § 31251, the Conservancy may award grants to nonprofit organizations and public agencies for the purpose of enhancement of coastal resources, which, because of human-induced events, or incompatible land uses, have suffered loss of natural and scenic values. This project will restore the function of a portion of the Prairie Creek floodplain, which has been altered by past timber activities and operations at the mill site, thereby improving water quality and enhancing habitat for salmonids and other coastal and marine resources.

Pursuant to Section 31252, the proposed project is located within an area identified in the Humboldt County Local Coastal Plan (LCP) (1982) as requiring public action to resolve existing

or potential resource protection problems. The LCP identifies the need for restoration of sensitive habitats affecting coastal resources, including Redwood Creek and its habitat.

Chapter 3.41, Sections A.1.d. and A.1.g. of the LCP defines environmentally sensitive habitats as “[R]ivers, creeks, and associated riparian habitats including Redwood Creek,...” and “[O]ther critical habitats for rare and endangered species listed on State or Federal lists”, respectively. Chapter 3.41, Section G requires that “the biological productivity and quality of coastal streams...appropriate to maintain optimum populations of marine organisms shall be maintained and restored” and identifies Redwood Creek among these streams. Prairie Creek is a critical tributary to Redwood Creek and supports most of the state and federally listed endangered coho, Chinook and steelhead trout in the Redwood Creek system. The project site is located on Prairie Creek, approximately one and a half miles feet upstream of the confluence of Prairie and Redwood Creeks. Enhancing habitat in Prairie Creek benefits salmonids of Redwood Creek and is thus consistent with the LCP.

Pursuant to § 31251.2(a), the Conservancy may fund projects outside the coastal zone when the project will enhance a watershed resource that is partially outside the coastal zone for purposes of enhancing coastal resources within the coastal zone. The project site is located outside the coastal zone. However, Prairie Creek drains to Redwood Creek, which is located partially in the coastal zone. Prairie Creek supports 80% of the coho salmon population in the Redwood Creek watershed. Thus, enhancing habitat in a watershed located outside of the coastal zone will directly benefit salmonid resources both within and outside the coastal zone.

Pursuant to § 31253, the Conservancy may provide up to the total of the cost of any coastal resource enhancement project taking into consideration the total cost of the project, the fiscal resources of the grantee, the urgency of the project and other factors as determined by the Conservancy. Consistent with this section, the proposed contribution, intended for completion of a significant coastal habitat enhancement project, is a reasonable component of the project cost (approximately 26%). To date for all phases of restoration implementation, the Conservancy contribution will be approximately 20%.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY’S [2023-2027 STRATEGIC PLAN](#) GOAL(S) & OBJECTIVE(S):

Consistent with **Goal 1.2 Return Power to Tribes**, the proposed project was developed in partnership with the Yurok Tribe and supports work by the Yurok Tribe to restore riparian habitat and steward ancestral lands.

Consistent with **Goal 1.4 Incorporate Workforce Development in Our Projects**, the proposed project incorporates workforce development by providing opportunity to the all-Yurok construction crews to construct the project and opportunities to the Yurok Tribe Fisheries Department’s technicians, under the supervision of experienced engineers, to train in field measurement/survey techniques.

Consistent with **Goal 3.2 Restore or Enhance Habitats**, the proposed project will complete one habitat restoration plan.

Consistent with **Goal 3.2 Restore or Enhance Habitats**, the proposed project will restore 15.9 acres of important coastal stream and riparian floodplain.

Consistent with **Goal 3.2 Restore or Enhance Habitats**, the proposed project will complete one anadromous fish habitat project.

CEQA COMPLIANCE:

On September 3, 2020, the Conservancy adopted the “Initial Study/Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Redwood National and State Park Visitor Center and Restoration Project” (IS/MND) and authorized funding for the project. The Conservancy filed a Notice of Determination with the State Clearinghouse on September 8, 2020. The project remains substantially unchanged from its description in the IS/MND, and no new environmental information or change in circumstances require a re-evaluation of the potential environmental effects of the project (14 Cal Code. Regs. Section 15162(b)). After completing the second construction season in 2022, it was determined that use of a curtain burner to manage removed invasive and non-invasive vegetation would be beneficial and efficient for the project and would not create greenhouse gas emissions in excess of the California Air Resources Board threshold used for assessing the project’s potential greenhouse gas impact. This minor change to the project was made after the Conservancy approved the MND, but no new MND is required because the change causes no new significant impacts. An analysis of air quality related to the use of the curtain burner is attached to this staff recommendation (Exhibit 6). Accordingly, the proposed authorization remains consistent with the CEQA findings adopted by the Conservancy in connection with the September 3, 2020 authorization.