

COASTAL CONSERVANCY

Staff Recommendation
December 11, 2003

PRINCE MEMORIAL GREENWAY PHASE 2004

File No. 03-141
Project Manager: Maxene Spellman

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Authorization to disburse up to \$137,600 to the City of Santa Rosa for the construction of recreational pathway improvements and fencing for the Prince Memorial Greenway Phase 2004 in downtown Santa Rosa along Santa Rosa Creek.

LOCATION: City of Santa Rosa, Sonoma County

PROGRAM CATEGORY: San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy

EXHIBITS

- Exhibit 1: Project Location Map, Site Map, and Photographs
- Exhibit 2: Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration
- Exhibit 3: Letters of Support

RESOLUTION AND FINDINGS:

Staff recommends that the State Coastal Conservancy adopt the following resolution pursuant to Sections 31160-31164 of the Public Resources Code:

“The State Coastal Conservancy hereby authorizes disbursement of an amount not to exceed one hundred thirty-seven thousand six hundred dollars (\$137,600) to the City of Santa Rosa to construct pathway and fencing improvements as part of Phase 2004 of the Prince Memorial Greenway trail development and riparian restoration on Santa Rosa Creek.”

Staff further recommends that the Conservancy adopt the following findings:

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

1. The proposed authorization is consistent with the purposes and objectives of the San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy Program, Chapter 4.5 of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code Sections 31160-31164.
2. The proposed project is consistent with the Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines adopted by the Conservancy on January 24, 2001.

3. The Conservancy has independently reviewed the Mitigated Negative Declaration prepared by and adopted on August 12, 1997, by the City of Santa Rosa, attached to the accompanying staff recommendation as Exhibit 2, and finds that there is no substantial evidence that the construction of pathway improvements and fencing as part of the Prince Memorial Greenway Phase 2004 implementation will have a significant effect on the environment, as defined in 14 California Code of Regulations Section 15382.
 4. There is no substantial evidence before the Conservancy that the project will have a potentially adverse effect, either individually or cumulatively, on wildlife resources as defined under California Code of Regulations Section 753.5(d) regarding the potential for adverse effect on wildlife resources as defined under California Fish and Game Code Section 711.2.”
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PROJECT SUMMARY:

This authorization would disburse up to \$137,600 to the City of Santa Rosa for the construction of pathway curbing, stairs, and fencing along a 950-foot stretch of creek that is part of the Prince Memorial Greenway Project (Greenway Project). Implementation of the Greenway Project is in its fourth consecutive year of implementation. The proposed authorization would fund components of the fifth year, Phase 2004. The City-adopted Santa Rosa Creek Master Plan, inclusive of the downtown section Greenway Project, recommends enhancement of the Santa Rosa creek for fish and wildlife habitat, creation of an open space corridor along the Creek, development of recreational facilities, and the provision of educational opportunities for citizens of Santa Rosa and the surrounding area.

The proposed Phase 2004 of the Greenway Project includes a new bike path on the north side of the creek, concrete pedestrian paths, a pedestrian bridge, stairs, fencing, lighting, stone columns, storm drains, retaining walls, erosion control measures including extensive planting, interpretive signs, and a new 22,000-square-foot public plaza. The new trails will provide linkages between six miles of existing trail along the creek and other recreational facilities. Specifically, it will link downtown Santa Rosa to the Santa Rosa Creek Trail, a City-owned 80-acre recreational facility, and the regional bicycle/pedestrian trail system of the Joe Rodota/West County Regional Trail in the western part of Santa Rosa and the City of Sebastopol in western Sonoma county. The proposed project will also link to the northwest through City and County parks, and Annadel State Park where there is a link to the Bay Area Ridge Trail.

Proposed Phase 2004 habitat restoration elements are being funded by other project partners but will significantly benefit fish and wildlife. The proposed Phase 2004 project will restore stream conditions to support federally listed steelhead trout rearing throughout the year. Specific restoration measures include removal of concrete rip-rap, installation of rock wing deflectors and boulder weirs to create pools, riffles and glides, creation of a low-flow channel, and revegetation of the channel bottom and riparian area. These improvements are expected to enable steelhead trout in the Russian River to access 14 miles of excellent habitat in the upper Santa Rosa Creek.

The Phase 2004 Prince Memorial Greenway project is being implemented through a remarkable partnership of regional, state and federal agencies. Assisting the City with the funding of construction of the pathway and recreational facilities are the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District (SCAPOS), the State of California Resources Agency (Resources Agency), the U.S. Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), and the Coastal Conser-

vancy. The California Department of Fish and Game (DFG), the Resource Agency, and the NRCS are assisting the City with creek restoration.

The City has collaborated with many of these agencies and citizens groups to complete restoration and trail improvements covering 4.3 acres of the 10-acre Greenway to date. When completed, the proposed Phase 2004 will add 1.7 acres for a total of 6 acres of Greenway improvements. Subsequent Phases 2005 and 2006 will complete construction of the trail and recreational facilities, restoration of riparian and anadromous fish habitat, and installation of educational signage for the entire Greenway.

Site Description: The Prince Memorial Greenway includes ten acres and encompasses a 110-foot-wide, 3,900-linear-foot open space corridor that includes Santa Rosa Creek in downtown Santa Rosa. The corridor is adjacent to businesses, schools, and residences and is a central point of city and county transportation linkages.

Santa Rosa Creek is a 22-mile long tributary of the Laguna de Santa Rosa, which flows into the Russian River. Steelhead trout were once abundant in the Russian River and up to the headwaters of the Santa Rosa Creek. The downtown section of the creek was channelized in the 1960s for flood control purposes, and is now filled with rip-rap, preventing steelhead in the Laguna de Santa Rosa and Russian River from continuing upstream in Santa Rosa Creek where there is 14 miles of high quality rearing and spawning habitat. Earlier phases of the Prince Memorial Greenway project resulted in the restoration of a small portion of the downtown section of the creek. The habitat restoration component of the Phase 2004 is designed to enhance an additional 950 feet of anadromous fish and riparian habitat and improve water quality while maintaining the flood carrying capabilities of the channel. Two subsequent phases are expected to complete the enhancement of the entire 3,900 feet of creek to once again provide the steelhead access to the upper reaches of the Santa Rosa Creek.

Project History: The Prince Memorial Greenway Project is rooted in a history of a strong community-based effort. Initially, the Prince family gave the City \$4,000,000 to create a public area that everyone could enjoy. This generous donation and the desire for urban open spaces, inspired a citizens group to form the Committee for Restoring Santa Rosa Creek in 1989. The group sponsored a series of public workshops that led to the development of the Santa Rosa Creek Master Plan that was adopted by the City, Sonoma County and the Sonoma County Water Agency in 1993. The group continues to work with the City to raise funds to implement the Master Plan. To date the City has acquired 57,380 square feet consisting of the Prince Memorial Greenway, completed Phases 2000, 2001, and 2002, and begun construction of Phase 2003 (See Exhibit 1, Pictures).

Finally, in 2002, the Creek Stewardship Program was created as a joint effort between the Sonoma County Water Agency and the City of Santa Rosa's Public Works, Recreation and Parks, and Police Departments to increase the public's awareness of creek values and support volunteer Creek Stewards. Today, volunteer Creek Stewards monitor and maintain the completed phases of the Prince Memorial Greenway. Their efforts have reduced maintenance costs and assisted local government in providing timely responses to urgent creek issues. As the proposed and subsequent phases of the project are completed, the City expects more volunteers to join the Creek Stewardship Program. In the past few years high school students also participated in a City sponsored Art Quest Program which has resulted in painted renderings of creek and wildlife habitat on 11 park benches installed along the completed phases of the project.

PROJECT FINANCING:

Coastal Conservancy	\$ 137,600
City of Santa Rosa, Prince Trust Fund donation	420,000
Sonoma Co. Water Agency, Zone 1A	500,000
Calif. Dept. of Fish and Game	448,900
Nat'l. Resource Conservation Service	1,322,272
State Resources Agency	1,000,000
SCAPOS	<u>534,403</u>
Total Project Cost	\$4,363,175

The Conservancy's contribution of \$137,600 is expected to come from its FY 02/03 appropriation from the "California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks and Coastal Protection Act of 2002" (Proposition 40) for the San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy Program. This funding source may be used for the deployment and development of land and water resources in accordance with the provisions of the Conservancy's enabling legislation, Division 21 of the Public Resources Code (Section 5096.650(b)). The proposed project serves to assist in the development of land-based public access along a greenway designed to protect water resources. In addition, as discussed below, the project is consistent with Chapter 4.5 of Division 21. Proposition 40 also requires the Conservancy to give priority to grant projects with matching funds (§5096.651). The bulk of the overall Greenway project is supported by matching funds.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S ENABLING LEGISLATION:

The project is undertaken pursuant to Chapter 4.5 of the Conservancy's enabling legislation, Public Resources Code Sections 31160-31164, to address resource and recreational goals in the San Francisco Bay Area. Under §31162(a) the Conservancy may act to improve public access to and around the bay, urban open spaces, and ridgetops by completing regional trail systems that are consistent with locally and regionally adopted master plans and general plans. Section 31162(c) authorizes the Conservancy to assist in the implementation of the adopted plans of local governments. Under §31162(d), the Conservancy may assist projects that provide open space and natural areas that are accessible to urban populations for recreational purposes. As also required by §31163(d), the Conservancy is to give priority to projects that support adopted local or regional plans, are multi-jurisdictional or serve a regional constituency, can be implemented in a timely way, and include matching funds.

Consistent with §31162(a), (c) and (d), the project will connect the existing regional trail system to the City of Santa Rosa and from there to the Bay Area Ridge Trail, and will provide a trail and open space through urban neighborhoods. The project also serves to implement policies established by the 1993 Santa Rosa Creek Master Plan, the 1996 Santa Rosa Waterways Plan, Sonoma County General Plan (Policies 4.1 and 4.2 related to equestrian, hiking and bicycle trails), the City of Santa Rosa General Plan goals supporting urban design, transportation, parks and recreation, open space, biological resources and flood protection, the 1997 Sonoma County Bikeways Plan, the City of Santa Rosa Update of the Bicycle Master Plan, the City of Santa Rosa's Southwest Area Plan, and the Russian River Action Plan that seeks funding and cooperation on projects that protect and restore the watershed's fisheries. Finally, this project is a stellar example of the use of local, regional, state and federal matching funds (see the "Project Financing" section above).

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL(S) & OBJECTIVE(S):

Consistent with **Goal 10, Objective A** of the Conservancy's Strategic Plan, the partner-funded portion of the proposed project will restore 950 feet of the Santa Rosa Creek/Laguna de Santa Rosa watershed. The project will also restore riparian habitat scattered along the 950 feet of Santa Rosa Creek slated for restoration.

Consistent with **Goal 11, Objectives A and B**, the proposed project will provide recreational facilities to include 950 feet of pedestrian and bicycle trails along the Santa Rosa Creek (**A**), and link urban open spaces to the Joe Rodota/West County regionally significant trail and to Ridge Trail (**B**).

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA & GUIDELINES:

The proposed project is consistent with the Conservancy's Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines adopted January 24, 2001, in the following respects:

Required Criteria

1. **Promotion of the Conservancy's statutory programs and purposes:** See the "Consistency with Conservancy's Enabling Legislation" section above.
2. **Consistency with purposes of the funding source:** See the "Project Financing" section above.
3. **Support of the public:** Local public support for creek restoration has been responsible for initiating this project and has been strong since citizens of Santa Rosa formed the Committee for Restoring Santa Rosa Creek in 1989. Today Santa Rosa citizens also volunteer through the City's Creek Stewardship Program and support a parcel tax to fund creek restoration and protect water quality of local streams implemented by projects such as the proposed restoration of the Prince Memorial Greenway. This project also enjoys financial support from its partners (see the "Project Financing" section above) and strong support from Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey, Senator Wesley Chesbro, Assembly Member Patricia Wiggins, and the West End Neighborhood Association (see Exhibit 3, Letters of Support).
4. **Location:** This project is located in downtown Santa Rosa in Sonoma County, and is within the jurisdiction of the San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy Program. The proposed creek restoration will benefit the federally listed anadromous steelhead trout, and water quality of the Santa Rosa Creek and the Laguna de Santa Rosa/Russian River. The proposed trail improvements and its linkages to the regional and Ridge Trail will benefit urban populations of Santa Rosa, the most populous city in Sonoma County, and people of the surrounding communities.
5. **Need:** The Conservancy's contribution is needed to fill in a gap in funding necessary to enable the City of Santa Rosa to commence with Phase 2004 of the proposed project.
6. **Greater-than-local interest:** See "4. Location" above for a discussion of why the project serves a greater-than-local interest.

Additional Criteria

7. **Urgency:** Unless Phase 2004 can begin on schedule, subsequent phases will be delayed and the access to upstream high quality habitat for the anadromous steelhead will be postponed indefinitely. The opportunity to provide the gap funding matched by over four and a half million dollars in other local, state, and federal funding will also be lost.
8. **Resolution of more than one issue:** This project will simultaneously resolve the following issues:
 - Restoration of fish and wildlife habitat of the Santa Rosa Creek.
 - Construction of bicycle and pedestrian trails and recreational facilities providing access to urban open spaces to the populations of Santa Rosa and surrounding communities.
 - Protection of water quality of the Santa Rosa Creek watershed covered by a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit issued by the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board.
 - Erosion control of stream banks.
 - Education and increased awareness of sensitive natural resources related to fish and wildlife habitats in the Santa Rosa Creek watershed.
9. **Leverage:** See the “Project Financing” section above.
10. **Innovation:** The innovative design of the trail construction will address both trail creation and stream bank erosion. The City is innovative in its boldness with plans to remove the existing channel and complete channel reconstruction to provide channel improvements.
12. **Readiness:** The City is poised with commitments for funding and the ability to move from Phase 2003 to Phase 2004 during the beginning of 2004. Based on the City’s past performance in completing previous phases in a timely manner, there is every reason to expect that the City will be able to complete the proposed Phase 2004 on schedule.
13. **Realization of prior Conservancy goals:** See the “Project History” section above.
15. **Cooperation:** See the “Project Summary” section above, discussion on partnerships among regional, state, and federal agencies, above.

COMPLIANCE WITH CEQA:

The City of Santa Rosa is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the Prince Memorial Greenway Project, including Phase 2004. The City circulated the Initial Study for the project for public review between July 11, 1997 and August 11, 1997, and responded to comments. On August 12, 1997, at a public hearing, the City Council adopted a Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation and Monitoring Program for the Prince Memorial Greenway Project. (See Exhibit 2 for City’s environmental documentation.) On August 14, 1997, the City filed a Notice of Determination for the Negative Declaration.

The Conservancy, a CEQA responsible agency with respect to the project, will provide funds to the City for trail improvements. Specifically, the Conservancy will help fund construction of curbing, fencing and stairs along 950 feet of trail. As determined by the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration, in the absence of mitigation, the Conservancy-funded activities might have caused adverse environmental effects with respect to Geology and Soils (GEO), Biology

(BIO), Water (HDRO), Transportation/Circulation (TRANS), and Hazards (HAZ). However, as approved, the project will be mitigated to reduce impacts to less than significant in all Conservancy-funded elements of the project. These potential impacts and the mitigations needed to reduce or eliminate the impacts include the following:

CATEGORY – Impact / Mitigation

GEO – Erosion / See “HYDRO – long term erosion and sedimentation” below .

BIO – Exposure to Hazardous Materials / Seal areas where concentrated contaminants occur, and develop marsh areas to help to trap the pulse of low level contamination which may be released after construction.

HYDRO – Long Term Erosion and Sedimentation / Use erosion control fabric and planting, reshape channel bed to attain flow equilibrium, and use weir structures.

HYDRO – Flood Hazard–Vegetative Debris on bridge piers / Monitor high flow bridge conditions and remove woody debris posing risk prior to high runoff season.

HDRO – Flood Hazard–Changes in Hydraulic Conditions / Apply hydraulic analysis through modeling to test and refine design for proposed channel to prevent downstream flooding, and use gages to monitor changes in vegetation and channel conditions on peak flow elevations in the channel. If conditions are shown to be “rough” according to the hydraulic model, undertake construction or maintenance activities to reduce calibrated channel “roughness.”

TRANS – Bicycle Safety / Design and operate bicycle pathway on the north side of Santa Rosa Creek to meet accepted standards as follows: 1) meet standards for Class I bikeways according to the State Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, 2) design street crossings to meet City and California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) standards, 3) design multi-use pathway and bikeway to meet Caltrans Highway Design Manual and American with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements, 4) provide railings where drop-off next to path is over 20% slope, 5) adopt specific maintenance plan for pathway, 6) provide 24-hour lighting along pathway, 7) install bollards and signs to make bicyclists aware of where streets intersect with the pathway and of its termination, 8) design ramps with sufficient turning radius and signage, 9) post maximum bicycle speeds at 10 mph, and 10) post signs at either end of the bridge indicating that bicycles must be walked across the bridge.

TRANS – Pedestrian Safety / Design pedestrian facilities according to City and other accepted standards as follows: 1) sign all pedestrian-only paths to prohibit bicycles, 2) design paths to meet ADA requirements, 3) design paths for four feet minimum width, and 4) close pedestrian facilities prior to flood conditions and design facilities to withstand flooding and subsequent cleaning by heavy machinery.

HAZARD – Potential Exposure of Contaminated Soils / Evacuate and remove contaminated soils to an appropriate landfill or treatment location, install impermeable linings as needed to protect the creek and backfill creek bank with clean soil and rock where needed, monitor to observe soil conditions when concrete is removed and respond appropriately, and conduct supplemental soil sampling in exposed areas to achieve off-site disposal acceptance of materials and prepare contingency plans for temporary soil stockpiling locations in case that’s needed.

HAZARD – Contaminants Entering Stream Channel / Replace concrete channel to minimize stream scour and isolate contaminants, install slope stabilization and undertake separation meas-

ures where residual low concentration petroleum hydrocarbon may remain within underlying sidebank soils. Measures would include engineered terraces and slopes, rock placement, retention and enhancement of existing concrete liner, geotextile fabric, and landscaping.

HAZARD – Floating Oil Production / Remove oil during construction by pumping, skimming, excavation and disposal offsite, and by installing absorbent booms surrounding construction zones. Construct impermeable cut-off walls at the base of the creek channels where floating oil product has been identified. The cut-off walls will be about seven feet and will penetrate five or more feet beneath the shallow groundwater table surface.

HAZARD – Commingling Groundwater/Surface Water / Provide ongoing monitoring of surface water quality and include a quality program to evaluate seasonal performance of project mitigation measures. In slower water-ponding locations of marsh areas, plant cattails and other reed plants to encourage nutrient uptake and filtering of available organic compounds in the water column to have an overall beneficial impact on water quality and habitat improvement.

Consistent with CEQA, the Mitigated Negative Declaration includes a Mitigation Monitoring Program which identifies the City of Santa Rosa and the Sonoma County Water Agency as responsible for implementing all mitigation measures for the Hydrology Impacts and the City of Santa Rosa for all other impacts.

Staff has reviewed the City's Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation and Monitoring Program. Staff believes that the Conservancy-funded portion of the project will not have a significant effect on the environment if the proposed mitigation measures and Mitigation Monitoring Program are implemented. For the same reasons, staff has concluded that the Conservancy's project, as part of the Prince Memorial Greenway Phase 2004 implementation, does not have the potential for an adverse effect on wildlife and habitat as defined in Fish and Game Code Section 711.2. Staff, therefore, recommends that the Conservancy find that the proposed project, as mitigated, does not have the potential for an adverse effect on the environment as defined in 14 Cal. Code of Regulations, Section 15382 or on wildlife resources, as defined in Fish and Game Code Section 711.2.

Upon approval, staff will file a Notice of Determination for the project.