

COASTAL CONSERVANCY

Staff Recommendation
December 6, 2018

CLIMATE READY GRANTS

Project Nos. 16-012-02, 16-052-02, 17-019-02, 18-037-01, 18-038-01, 18-039-01,
18-041-01, 18-042-01, 18-044-01, 18-045-01, 18-046-01, 18-048-01
Project Manager: Carrie Boyle and Mary Small

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Authorization to disburse up to \$3,800,000 to 12 nonprofit organizations, public agencies, and a tribal government for Climate Ready projects that facilitate reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and address the effects of climate change on coastal resources and communities.

LOCATION: Various locations in coastal watersheds of California and in the counties of the San Francisco Bay Area (Exhibit 1).

PROGRAM CATEGORY: Climate Change

EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1: [Project Locations](#)

Exhibit 2: [Letters of Support](#)

Exhibit 3: [Mitigated Negative Declaration](#)

RESOLUTION AND FINDINGS:

Staff recommends that the State Coastal Conservancy adopt the following resolution pursuant to Sections 31100 *et seq.* of the Public Resources Code:

“The State Coastal Conservancy hereby authorizes the disbursement of an amount not to exceed three million eight hundred thousand dollars (\$3,800,000) to 12 nonprofit organizations, public agencies, and a tribal government, for projects that facilitate the reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and address climate change impacts within the State Coastal Conservancy’s jurisdiction as follows:

- Alameda County Community Development Agency: One hundred forty thousand dollars (\$140,000) to design and implement a heat resiliency program that includes planting trees
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and conducting community outreach in the communities of Ashland and Cherryland to increase the communities' ability to respond to the anticipated increase in extreme heat days as a result of climate change.

- Alameda County Resource Conservation District: Three hundred forty-three thousand nine hundred sixty-one dollars (\$343,961) to develop plans and implement management practices to sequester carbon and reduce GHG emissions on seven farms, vineyards and rangelands in Alameda County.
- American Rivers: Two hundred seventy-four thousand five hundred fifteen dollars (\$274,515) to conduct riparian restoration planning, community engagement and agency coordination in the Rheem Creek watershed in western Contra Costa County to address climate impacts.
- Big Sur Land Trust: Four hundred eighty-eight thousand seven hundred sixty dollars (\$488,760) to prepare design plans, permit applications and environmental documents and conduct community engagement to transform a portion of Carr Lake into an urban park in the City of Salinas.
- Community Conservation Solutions: Four hundred thousand dollars (\$439,680) to develop technical designs for the Natural Park at the Ramona Gardens Housing Development in the City of Los Angeles.
- Long Beach Water Department: Two hundred thirty-six thousand three hundred eighty-eight dollars (\$236,388) to replace 25 lawns with drought-tolerant gardens and plant trees in a disadvantaged community in the City of Long Beach that will sequester carbon, improve air quality, and provide urban cooling.
- Marin County Community Development Agency: Two hundred twenty thousand dollars (\$220,000) to conduct feasibility studies and develop designs for living shorelines projects at two to five sites in Tomales Bay to increase climate change resiliency.
- Ojai Valley Land Conservancy: Two hundred ninety-eight thousand three hundred fifty-seven dollars (\$298,357) to restore 23 acres of oak woodland habitat in the Ventura River Preserve in the City of Ojai.
- Pauma Band of Luiseño Indians: One hundred ninety-seven thousand six hundred eighty-one dollars (\$197,681) to implement a suite of demonstration carbon sink farming practices, monitor outcomes, develop a trail and conduct education and outreach at Pauma Tribal Farms in northwestern San Diego County.
- Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County: One hundred seventy-two thousand three hundred thirty-six dollars (\$172,336) for the Resource Conservation Districts of Santa Cruz County and San Mateo County to develop at least eight carbon farm plans.
- Santa Monica Bay Foundation: Four hundred eighty-four thousand seven hundred ninety-three dollars (\$484,793) to implement a living shorelines project to restore coastal bluffs, beaches and install eelgrass at Dockweiler Beach in Los Angeles County.

- The Trust for Public Land: Five hundred three thousand five hundred twenty-nine dollars (\$503,529) to complete implementation of a living schoolyard demonstration project at Markham Elementary School in East Oakland.

This authorization is subject to the following conditions:

1. Prior to disbursement of funds, the applicable grantee shall submit for the review and written approval of the Executive Officer of the Conservancy (Executive Officer) the following:
 - A detailed work program, schedule, and budget.
 - Names and qualifications of any contractors to be retained in carrying out the project.
 - A plan for acknowledgement of Conservancy funding.
 - If applicable, evidence that all permits and approvals required to implement the project have been obtained.
 - If applicable, evidence that the grantee has entered into agreements sufficient to enable the grantee to implement, operate, and maintain the project.
2. In carrying out each project, each grantee shall comply with all applicable requirements associated with disbursements from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF), including all requirements set forth in the Air Resources Board's GGRF Funding Guidelines.

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 Division 21 of the Public Resources Code Section 31113, regarding addressing climate change and potential climate change impacts.
2. The proposed project is consistent with the current Conservancy Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines.
3. Each nonprofit organization grantee proposed under this authorization is organized under section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code, and each of their purposes are consistent with Division 21 of the Public Resources Code.
4. The Conservancy has independently reviewed and considered the information contained in the *Final Mitigated Negative Declaration for The Alameda County Voluntary Local Program* adopted by the Alameda County Resource Conservation District on August 24, 2012, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) and attached to the accompanying staff recommendation as Exhibit 3. The Conservancy finds that the proposed project as designed and mitigated avoids, reduces, or mitigates the potentially significant environmental effects to a less-than-significant level, and that there is no substantial evidence based on the record as a whole that the project may have a

significant effect on the environment, as defined in 14 Cal. Code Regulations Section 15382.”

PROJECT SUMMARY:

This authorization would provide up to \$3,800,000 to nonprofits, public agencies, and a tribal government for 12 projects that facilitate the reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and increase resilience of coastal resources and communities to the impacts of climate change. These projects are located along the coast, in coastal watersheds and within the San Francisco Bay Area. The projects were the highest-ranking projects in the Conservancy’s fifth Climate Ready grant round. The Conservancy solicited projects in spring of 2018 and received 23 applications requesting more than \$8.5 million in funding.

The Conservancy’s Climate Ready Program encourages local governments and non-governmental organizations to prepare for a changing climate by advancing planning and implementation of on-the-ground actions that reduce GHG emissions, sequester carbon, or lessen the future impacts of climate change on California’s coastal communities, infrastructure and natural resources. This fifth round of Climate Ready grants will be funded by state cap-and-trade proceeds, which are deposited in the state greenhouse gas reduction fund (GGRF) and administered by the California Air Resources Board (CARB). In order to meet GGRF’s legislative purposes, projects must (1) facilitate the achievement of reductions of GHG emissions and further the purposes of the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 and related statutes, and (2) where feasible, include additional co-benefits, such as investment in disadvantaged communities and economic, environmental and public health benefits to the state. The projects selected through this grant round achieve the goals of facilitating the reduction of GHG emissions, and helping prepare for future impacts of climate change. Most of the recommended projects also benefit disadvantaged communities,¹ and include environmental and public health co-benefits. Conservancy staff’s goal in selecting projects to recommend for funding was that at least 75% of total available GGRF funding be used for projects located in or benefitting disadvantaged communities; this goal has been exceeded as projects that are located in and benefit disadvantaged communities account for 86% of the total funding recommended for this

¹For purposes of GGRF, the terms “disadvantaged communities” and “low income communities,” are defined at Health and Safety Code Sections 39711 and 39713. In this staff report, the term “disadvantaged communities” encompasses both disadvantaged and low-income communities within the GGRF definitions. Section 39711 calls on the California Environmental Protection Agency to identify disadvantaged communities for purposes of GGRF. Disadvantaged communities are identified by the California Environmental Protection Agency as the top 25% most impacted census tracts in CalEnviroScreen 3.0. Low-income communities are defined as the census tracts that are either at or below 80% of the statewide median income, or at or below the threshold designated as low-income by the California Department of Housing and Community Development’s 2016 State Income Limits. For more information, see: <https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/capandtrade/auctionproceeds/communityinvestments.htm>.

round. For further discussion on GGRF, please see the Project Finance section.

Staff recommends funding the following 12 projects for the fifth round of the Climate Ready Program. The selected projects fall into four project types: 1) urban greening, 2) carbon farming, 3) watershed and wetland restoration, and 4) living shorelines. The projects are arranged by project type, with a description of the project type and how it is consistent with the funding purposes. Each individual project summary includes the grantee; project name; recommended funding amount; geographic region; and a brief project description.

Urban Greening Projects

Five urban greening projects are being recommended for funding. These projects will address climate change impacts, such as extreme heat and drought, by increasing urban tree canopy or creating green space within urban areas to reduce urban heat islands. These projects will also facilitate the reduction of GHG emissions through carbon sequestration. One of the projects involves conducting the planning and design necessary to create a new urban park. All of the selected projects include extensive community participation. All are located in and will benefit disadvantaged communities.²

Alameda County Community Development Agency Cooling Our Communities

**\$140,000
San Francisco Bay Area**

The Alameda County Community Development Agency, in conjunction with the County’s Public Health Department and Office of Sustainability, will undertake planning and community outreach for a heat resiliency program in the disadvantaged communities of Ashland and Cherryland to increase the communities’ ability to respond to the anticipated increase in severity and frequency of extreme heat days as a result of climate change. The Agency strives to employ a “health equity” approach to its work; in other words, to ensure that no matter who you are, where you live, how much money you make, or the color of your skin, that you are able to lead a healthy, fulfilling, and productive life. This proposed project is part of the Agency’s health equity initiative. Ashland and Cherryland are two adjacent unincorporated areas surrounded by the Cities of Hayward and San Leandro and the unincorporated communities of San Lorenzo and Castro Valley. They were identified as the two most vulnerable communities in a 2018 heat vulnerability assessment conducted by the Alameda County Public Health Department; both communities have less than 0.5% tree cover. The proposed project will plant trees to facilitate the reduction of GHG emissions and mitigate the impacts of heat in these communities.

The project includes outreach, training, engagement and information-sharing with the communities to jointly identify additional methods of increasing resilience to heat impacts. The proposed project builds on the momentum generated in two half-day workshops: one workshop

² The Conservancy considers projects benefiting and located in disadvantaged communities to include planning projects.

with the Alameda Community Development Agency’s Planning Department on reducing heat impacts in the built environment, and another with the Alameda Community Development Agency’s Health Homes Department on wildfire smoke and emergency preparedness and communications. The workshops were facilitated by the Alameda County Office of Sustainability and supported by a Climate Ready Technical Assistance grant from the Conservancy.

Proposed Funds

Coastal Conservancy	\$140,000
Alameda County Community Development Agency’s Planning Department	\$3,000
Alameda County Public Health Department	\$3,000
<u>Alameda County Office of Sustainability</u>	<u>\$3,000</u>
Project Total	\$149,000

The Trust for Public Land

\$503,529

Markham Elementary Living Schoolyard

SF Bay Area

The Trust for Public Land’s Markham Elementary Living Schoolyard project will transform a hot, asphalt-covered schoolyard in a dense and disadvantaged community in East Oakland into a green and shaded park-like environment. Markham Elementary was one of five schools included in the Living Schoolyards for Oakland Initiative’s pilot program funded by a 2017 Coastal Conservancy Proposition 1 grant to the Trust for Public Land, which led an intensive community outreach and participatory planning phase for the five schools. This proposed project will expand on the Living Schoolyards for Oakland Initiative and make Markham a large-scale green schoolyard demonstration site for the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD). Markham Elementary School has a poverty rate of 32%, which exceeds the Oakland Unified School District average of 20%, and English language learners make up 41% of the student body. The school also experiences greater degrees of health issues and exposure to pollutants, as indicated by the school’s asthma rate of 18%, which exceeds the state average of 12.5%.

The project will remove approximately 12,000 square feet of asphalt and replace it with native plantings, drought-tolerant grass, bioswales, mulch, and decomposed granite. It will plant approximately 60 large canopy trees, 48 of which will be strategically placed to shade buildings and reduce energy use. The 1.88-acre site’s canopy cover will increase from 5% to almost 35%. The project will allow for hands-on, outdoor experiences in the garden and provide opportunities to incorporate the “outdoor classroom” into core curriculum for math, science, social studies, language arts, and nutrition/health education at all grade levels. The project will re-introduce ecological functions to the schoolyard by filtering and absorbing rainfall, capturing carbon, reducing temperatures, and creating habitat. The OUSD has committed time and staffing at both the school site and the administrative levels to this project, with the OUSD Facilities Team, the OUSD Garden Coordinator, and school community being full partners in design, implementation and maintenance.

Proposed Funds

Coastal Conservancy	\$503,529
Project Total	\$503,529

The Trust for Public Land will provide in-kind staff time with an estimated value of \$34,150.

Big Sur Land Trust **\$488,760**
Carr Lake Park and Wetlands **Central Coast**

This proposed project seeks to transform a portion of Carr Lake in the City of Salinas, California, into an urban park and green space, while providing floodplain enhancement and water quality improvement. The City of Salinas, the most populated city in the Central Coast region, is a disadvantaged and park-poor community; it has a ratio of 1.7 acres of park land per 1000 residents (Los Angeles, San Francisco, and San Jose that have 9.8, 6.6, and 15.8 acres of park land per 1,000 residents, respectively). The community has long imagined transforming Carr Lake into a multi-benefit green space, serving as a “central park” in the heart of Salinas. Currently, the 73-acre project site is a seasonally dry, undeveloped, historic lake bed. Through this project, BSLT, the owner of the project site, will restore the site to its original seasonal wetlands and perennial vegetation of native grasses, shrubs, and trees, which will facilitate the reduction of GHG emissions through carbon sequestration and improve air quality. The restored ecosystems will function as flood water detention areas, which will reduce erosion and the transport of sediment and nutrients from the site to areas downstream. Thus, in addition to green space and GHG emissions reduction benefits, this project will create water quality improvements.

The proposed grant for this phase of the project will complete the conceptual design phase with 30%-50% site design plans, prepare documents for permitting and CEQA environmental review, develop monitoring plans, quantify project benefits, and continue community engagement.

Proposed Funds

Coastal Conservancy	\$488,760
<u>Big Sur Land Trust Comprehensive Campaign</u>	<u>\$600,000</u>
Project Total	\$1,163,760

Big Sur Land Trust will provide in-kind staff time with an estimated value of \$75,000.

Community Conservation Solutions **\$439,680**
Natural Park at Ramona Gardens **South Coast**

Community Conservation Solutions seeks to transform a neglected 4-acre area in a public housing development into an open space park in Northern Boyle Heights, a park-poor Los Angeles community. Northern Boyle Heights falls in the top 1% of polluted communities in California due to the adjacent 15-lane freeway and transit corridor and nearby industrial land uses. Ramona Gardens is one of the largest public housing projects in L.A. County, providing housing to 1,800 residents, including 700 children. The proposed project includes preparing plans for a park that will facilitate the reduction of GHG emissions through sequestering carbon,

and will improve air quality, restore native habitat. The proposed project includes preparing plans for a walking trail, arroyo overlook, shaded seating, a Plaza Verde (Green Plaza), and stormwater capture improvements. The Coastal Conservancy supported the initial concept planning phase of this project through a prior grant.

With this grant, Community Conservation Solutions will further technical design and specifications of the elements identified in the community-driven concept plan. In addition, the proposed project includes community and stakeholder engagement, communications and presentation materials in English and Spanish, and coordination with public agencies.

Proposed Funds

Coastal Conservancy	\$439,680
<u>California Air Resources Board</u>	<u>\$387,189</u>
Project Total	\$826,869

Community Conservation Solutions will provide in-kind services with an estimated value of \$41,363.

Long Beach Water Department

\$236,388

Direct Install Garden Program for Disadvantaged Communities

South Coast

The Long Beach Water Department’s (LBWD) Direct Install Garden (DIG) Program will replace 25 lawns with drought-tolerant gardens, and will plant a minimum of 24 coast live oak within a disadvantaged community in Northern Long Beach. The proposed project will facilitate the reduction of GHG emissions through sequestering carbon, and will improve air quality, and will provide needed urban cooling. Water-use efficiency and stormwater capture features will also be installed to conserve water and reduce discharge to the Los Angeles River. The community is highly urbanized, with small lawns and very few trees, and the increased water costs and strict water use regulations during the extended drought have led to an increase of brown lawns and dirt lots.

The City of Long Beach Climate Resiliency Assessment Report (December 2015) identifies planting trees as an important mitigation measure in combating the urban heat island effect. As part of the proposed project, LBWD will produce an outreach program, enroll 25 homeowners in the DIG program, and hire landscape designers. In addition, LBWD will leverage a long-established partnership with Conservation Corps of Long Beach (CCLB), who will educate and train young adults to assist with the outreach, marketing, and labor for the project. CCLB crews will remove existing turf and install plants, irrigation systems, stormwater capture features, and mulch at each home. LBWD will install educational signs at each home and share multi-lingual outreach materials.

Proposed Funds

Coastal Conservancy	\$236,388
<u>LBWD General Fund</u>	<u>\$236,388</u>
Project Total	\$472,775

Carbon Farming Projects

Three carbon farming projects are being recommended for funding. These proposed projects advance the implementation of agricultural practices that improve the rate at which carbon dioxide is removed from the atmosphere and converted to plant material or soil organic matter. In addition to enhancing carbon sequestration and facilitating the reduction of GHG emissions, carbon farm practices can increase drought tolerance, lower irrigation costs, improve water filtration, increase groundwater recharge, reduce farm runoff and improve water quality, provide habitat, and enhance food security. The Conservancy has supported carbon farm plans in prior Climate Ready grant rounds. The three carbon farming projects selected in this round will apply carbon farm practices to new types of agriculture, including row crops. These proposed projects also include the additional benefits of public education and outreach.

Alameda County Resource Conservation District

\$343,961

Alameda County Carbon Farms

San Francisco Bay Area

For its proposed project, the Alameda County Resource Conservation District (Alameda RCD) will work with a variety of landowners to develop carbon farm plans (CFPs) and implement a suite of pilot site-specific management practices on seven different properties in Alameda County, which will sequester carbon and reduce GHG emissions on natural and working lands. The demonstration sites will represent three main types of agriculture in Alameda County: farms, vineyards and rangelands. Practices may include compost application, cover-cropping, hedgerow plantings, and riparian and oak woodland restoration.

Specifically, the proposed project will develop and implement CFPs for one row crop farm (Crop Farm 1) and two vineyards (Wente and Small Vineyard 1). The RCD will submit the finalized CFPs to the Coastal Conservancy for approval prior to implementation of specific management practices. The proposed project will also implement specific management practices on two ranches, Ranch J and Ranch 2, for which CFPs already exist. The proposed project will also integrate carbon planning practices into Sunol AgPark's existing management plan, a working and teaching farm run through a partnership between the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission and Alameda RCD. The activities at Sunol AgPark will include three demonstration workshops for landowners interested in implementing carbon sequestering management practices, and adding information about climate-beneficial farming practices to the Sunol AgPark curriculum. Finally, the proposed project will implement management practices on the Altamont Property ranch, which is owned by the Alameda County Waste Management Authority. The Altamont Property's existing CFP was developed with funding support from the Department of Water Resources.

The majority of the implementation work conducted under this project will be for Ranch J and the Altamont Property. Restoration work on "Ranch J" will be conducted in collaboration with Point Blue's Students & Teachers Restoring A Watershed (STRAW), program, which will provide 120-175 youth with hands-on riparian restoration education.

The Alameda RCD will collaborate with StopWaste, Alameda County's waste reduction agency, who will provide education and outreach to students and public landowners about the benefits of

carbon farming and the CFP planning and implementation process.

Proposed Funds

Coastal Conservancy	\$343,961
Department of Water Resources	\$100,000
San Francisco Public Utilities Commission	\$120,000
StopWaste	\$30,000
United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service	\$25,000
<u>Wente Vineyards</u>	<u>\$41,370</u>
Project Total	\$660,331

<u>Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County</u>	\$172,336
Central Coast Carbon Farms	Central Coast

The Resource Conservation Districts of Santa Cruz County (RCDSCC) and San Mateo County (RCDSMC) will work with growers and ranchers in disadvantaged communities to develop carbon farm plans (CFPs). CFPs identify practical opportunities for carbon sequestration and reduction of GHG emissions through practices, including but not limited to cover cropping, conservation crop rotation, compost application, nutrient management, silvopasture (the combination of trees with forage and livestock production) hedgerows, riparian plantings, and wetland restoration. To date, most carbon farm planning across the state has focused on rangeland and vineyard applications; the development and subsequent implementation of CFPs on annual specialty crop farms through this grant will serve as demonstration to enhance understanding and broader adoption of carbon farming on specialty crop operations statewide.

This project will engage and collaborate with new growers and ranchers, and develop at least eight CFPs in San Mateo, Santa Cruz, and Monterey Counties. RCDSCC will also provide technical assistance for implementation of climate smart agricultural practices to farmers that have transitioned from being farm workers, farmers whose first language is not English, and/or farmers who might need additional support to access government assistance. RCDSCC staff will additionally offer technical assistance to all participants applying for funding to implement their CFPs through the United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

Proposed Funds

Coastal Conservancy	\$172,336
United States Department of Agriculture	\$75,000
<u>California Department of Food and Agriculture</u>	<u>\$15,000</u>
Project Total	\$262,336

The Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County will provide in-kind match with an estimated value of \$15,000.

Pauma Band of Luiseño Indians \$197,681

Carbon Farming at Pauma Tribal Farms

South Coast

The proposed project is a pilot that will demonstrate how carbon sink farming practices can be applied under Southern California conditions to benefit farmers and support climate mitigation and resilience efforts. Pauma Tribal Farms is located just outside the Pauma Band of Luiseño Indians Reservation on 87 acres in the San Luis Rey Watershed in northwest San Diego County. The Pauma Band of Luiseño Indians purchased the farm in 2005, and they manage the farm with their tenants, the Solidarity Farm, which is a worker-owned cooperative that has started to implement carbon farming on the land that they lease from the Tribe. This demonstration project will expand the Tribe’s carbon farming efforts by implementing and disseminating information about five carbon sink farming practices: cover cropping, compost application, hedgerow installation, no-till and transition from row crops to trees. In addition to implementing these practices, the project will gather and analyze data from these carbon farming practices, including data on soil moisture, drought tolerance, and groundwater. The proposed funding will facilitate the purchase of drought tolerant seeds, native plants, trees, and high quality compost.

The Pauma Band of Luiseño Indians will hire consultants at RECON Environmental, Inc. and Native Grounds, Inc. to design and assist with practice implementation. Batra Ecological Strategies will gather and analyze relevant data, particularly those related to soil moisture, drought tolerance, and groundwater. Solidarity Farm will manage the no-till crop production and apply the compost.

As part of the demonstration project, Pauma Band of Luiseño Indians will also develop a 6,000-foot dirt and wood-chipped walking trail along the perimeter of the farm property. The trail will be created on existing developed farm land, and will only be used for guided tours of the carbon farm and demonstration project. The Pauma Band of Luiseño Indians will hold outreach events through site tours, farmers’ markets, and presentations. The Urban Corps of San Diego County will be hired to prepare the site for the trail and hedgerow, and windbreak installations. The hedgerow and windbreak installations will be funded with Natural Resources Conservation Service funds.

Proposed Funds

Coastal Conservancy	\$197,681
California Department of Food and Agriculture	\$80,000
<u>United States Department of Agriculture</u>	<u>\$53,018</u>
Project Total	\$330,699

The Pauma Band of Luiseño Indians will provide in-kind staff time with an estimated value of \$11,320. Solidarity Farm will provide inputs and labor with an estimate value of \$80,000.

Watershed Restoration Projects

Two watershed restoration projects are being recommended for funding under this authorization. Both of these projects are located in disadvantaged communities. The projects include restoring native habitat, restoring floodplains and planting of trees. These projects have multiple benefits,

including enhanced soil carbon sequestration, water quality, wildlife habitat, and biodiversity.

American Rivers

\$274,515

Rheem Creek Restoration

San Francisco Bay Area

American Rivers will conduct planning and community engagement activities at Rheem Creek in western Contra Costa County to sequester carbon, improve water quality, decrease flooding, and enhance riparian habitat for increased climate resilience. Rheem Creek faces many challenges, including dense development, which has led to highly degraded ecosystems and all but eliminated access to safe outdoor areas. The disadvantaged community of Rollingwood has suffered from flooding related to Upper Rheem Creek overflows for over 20 years. Climate change will not only increase flood frequency and unpredictability of Rheem Creek, but will also cause sea level rise, which will change boundary conditions at the downstream end of the creek and worsen flood conditions upstream.

The proposed project will undertake site-specific restoration planning, including conducting a detailed topographical survey and developing conceptual design plans for three sites in Upper Rheem Creek: the first is in the Rollingwood neighborhood in the furthest upstream reach of the open channel. The second site is the furthest downstream point in the Upper Rheem Creek, where City of San Pablo owns about 5 acres along Rheem Creek. Existing buildings on the site are scheduled to be demolished, and the city is partitioning the land for development. American Rivers is exploring opportunities to collaborate with the City of San Pablo to plan for a creek setback as part of the lot partitioning in order to provide floodplain and riparian habitat, sequester carbon, and provide access to a site that is now closed to the public. The third site is at Contra Costa College, where bioswales would treat runoff from a large parking lot and offer public education opportunities. American Rivers also seeks to embark on the next phase of planning to reach 60% designs, prepare for permitting and conduct environmental review of a separate Rollingwood reach site along Upper Rheem Creek. The topographical survey will involve minor trimming of select vegetation along the project site for purposes of data collection and having a clearer view of the topography of the site.

American Rivers is collaborating with the City of Richmond, the Watershed Project, Restoration Design Group, and the Contra Costa College to implement this project. American Rivers will engage heavily with the community, including door-to-door flood risk surveys, neighborhood work days, present at neighborhood council meetings, and design charrettes to solicit community input. American Rivers will develop a community-based maintenance and monitoring plan as part of the project.

Proposed Funds

Coastal Conservancy	\$274,515
<u>Integrated Regional Watershed Management Program</u>	<u>\$66,539</u>
Project Total	\$341,054

The Restoration Design Group will provide in-kind labor hours with an estimated value of \$8,100. The City of Richmond will provide in-kind labor hours with an estimated value of \$31,750.

Ojai Valley Land Conservancy

\$298,357

Oranges to Oaks

Central Coast

Ojai Valley Land Conservancy will plant 23 acres of a former, derelict orange grove in the Ventura River Preserve in Ojai, CA, with native coast live oak. The project will establish approximately 276 coast live oak trees and thousands of native companion shrubs and bunch grasses. The project site was previously acquired by Ojai Valley Land Conservancy in 2003 as part of a larger property for restoration purposes, which the Conservancy assisted in funding. Oak restoration had begun at the site one to two years before the Thomas Fire destroyed the site in December 2015. Ojai is particularly vulnerable to drought in part because it is not connected to the State Water Project that provides public water utility services elsewhere in the region. Ojai relies solely on rainfall to recharge its aquifers and fill its primary water reservoir, Lake Casitas. The project site is located on a historic terrace of the Ventura River. The soil has been compacted and degraded by the prior use of the property as a high-yield orange grove for nearly 100 years. Restoring the site to coast live oak woodland habitat will improve water retention and infiltration by improving soil quality. Planting native trees, woody shrubs, and grasses will provide multiple other benefits, including enhanced soil carbon sequestration, nutrient cycling, air and water quality, wildlife habitat, and biodiversity.

Proposed Funds

Coastal Conservancy	\$ 298,357
Federal Emergency Management Agency	\$82,500
Patagonia	\$10,000
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	\$25,000
Ojai Rotary West	\$2,500
Ventura County Oaks Mitigation Grant Program	\$18,430
U.S Department of Agriculture Natural Resource Conservation Service	\$12,340
Project Total	\$449,127

Living Shoreline Projects

Two projects are recommended for funding that involve the use of natural ecosystems to provide habitat, sequester carbon, and protect homes, roads, and infrastructure against storm surge, sea level rise, and erosion. One project is a planning project, the other is an implementation project. Both projects will help advance understanding of living shorelines and the use of natural shoreline infrastructure to adapt to sea level rise and other climate change impacts.

Marin County Community Development Agency

\$220,000

Tomales Bay Living Shorelines

North Coast

Marin County Community Development Agency will determine which living shorelines techniques could be developed on particular stretches of the Tomales Bay shoreline, will prioritize 2-5 sites where living shorelines are feasible, and will develop conceptual designs for those sites. The proposed project will have multiple benefits for habitat and climate-adaptive

infrastructure protection. The project will also include working with a stakeholder advisory committee, and evaluating the feasibility of living shorelines in Tomales Bay from a regulatory perspective.

Proposed Funds:

Coastal Conservancy \$ 220,000

The Marin County Community Development Agency will provide in-kind staff time with an estimated value of \$114,000.

Santa Monica Bay Restoration Foundation

\$484,793

Los Angeles Living Shorelines

South Coast

This project will create an innovative multi-habitat living shoreline comprised of coastal bluff, beach, and eelgrass habitats at Dockweiler State Beach in Los Angeles County. Santa Monica Bay Restoration Foundation (d.b.a. The Bay Foundation) will restore approximately 3.5 acres of impacted beach and coastal bluff habitat, and implement a pilot restoration to establish adjacent offshore eelgrass within a 1-acre footprint. The project has potential to provide a wide array of ecosystem benefits, including providing habitat for endangered shorebirds; benefitting local fisheries; sequestering carbon; and protecting homes, roads, and infrastructure against storm surge, sea level rise, and erosion. The Bay Foundation will conduct outreach and hold stakeholder meetings, continue conducting planning and design, prepare documentation for permitting, establish baseline monitoring, implement the restoration, and conduct post-restoration monitoring, maintenance, and outreach. This project will create a resilient shoreline that will benefit a disadvantaged community and provide educational and recreational opportunities to millions of residents and visitors.

Proposed Funds

Coastal Conservancy	\$ 484,793
The Bay Foundation	\$25,000
Dorrance Foundation	\$95,000
<u>U.S. Environmental Protection Agency</u>	<u>\$25,000</u>
Project Total	\$629,793

The Bay Foundation will provide in-kind staff time, volunteer time, and equipment with an estimated value of \$27,038.

Site Description: All of the projects serve a coastal region or coastal watersheds of the state, and/or are within one of more of the nine counties under the jurisdiction of the San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy Program. See Exhibit 1 for regional maps depicting the locations of the projects.

Project History:

California is already experiencing the impacts of climate change. Temperatures are becoming warmer; sea levels are rising; heat waves and wildfires are becoming more frequent and severe; and precipitation patterns are becoming more variable (California’s Fourth Climate Assessment, 2018). These impacts are projected to become more severe over the next century, and they will disproportionately affect vulnerable communities that already experience social, racial, health, and economic inequities (Safeguarding California, 2018).

In recognition of the urgent need to help local governments, ports and non-governmental organizations prepare for a changing climate, SB 1066 (Lieu, Statutes of 2012)³ was signed in 2012, giving the Conservancy explicit authority to address the impacts and potential impacts of climate change on resources within the Conservancy’s jurisdiction. This legislation enables the Conservancy to award grants for projects that reduce GHG emissions or address extreme weather events, sea level rise, storm surge, beach and bluff erosion, salt water intrusion, flooding, and other hazards that threaten ports, harbors, coastal communities, infrastructure and natural resources. The Conservancy established its Climate Ready program to address the climate change impacts identified in SB 1066, and give priority to climate change mitigation and adaptation projects that maximize public benefits.

The Conservancy released its first Climate Ready grant solicitation in 2013, and it received 76 proposals requesting over \$13.3 million in Conservancy funds. At the January 2014 Conservancy meeting, 20 Climate Ready projects were funded with approximately \$3 million. The first grant round largely consisted of planning projects. The Conservancy released the second Climate Ready grant solicitation in 2014, and focused specifically on implementation projects related to sea level rise, agriculture, or urban greening. In the second round, the Conservancy received 32 proposals requesting almost \$10 million. Eleven projects were awarded about \$2 million. The Conservancy released the third Climate Ready grant solicitation on October 6, 2014 and received 78 concept proposals requesting \$16.8 million. Of the 78 concept proposals, 12 applicants were asked to submit full proposals. Of these, 11 projects were awarded nearly \$2 million. The fourth Climate Ready round awarded three technical assistance grants in 2017. These grants did not provide financial support but rather provided staff expertise and assistance for climate workshops and planning projects.

This fifth round of Climate Ready grants was made possible by an appropriation of GGRF for the Climate Ready program. Please see “Project Financing” section for GGRF funding requirements. The solicitation was released on April 20, 2018. The Conservancy received 23 applications requesting over \$9.8 million. Of these, 12 are recommended for funding under this grant round. The recommendation to fund the 12 highly ranked projects for a total of \$3,800,000 is based on funding availability and prioritization of projects using the Conservancy’s Climate Ready criteria and CARB’s Funding Guidelines.

³ Public Resources Code Section 31113.

PROJECT FINANCING

Coastal Conservancy	\$3,800,000
Others (See Project Descriptions for breakdown)	<u>\$2,134,274</u>
Project Total	\$5,934,274

This fifth round of Climate Ready grants is funded by a 2017 appropriation of \$4 million⁴ of GGRF funds. The Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund Investment Plan and Communities Revitalization Act (Health and Safety Code (HSC) Sections 39710 – 39723) requires that GGRF funds be used to (1) facilitate the achievement of reductions of GHG emissions consistent with the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (HSC Sections 38500 *et seq*), and (2) to the extent feasible, achieve other co-benefits, such as maximizing economic, environmental and public health benefits and directing investment to disadvantaged communities (HSC 39712(b)). The Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 sets forth (among other things) certain GGRF funding priorities (HSC Section 38590.1).

Urban Greening Projects

The urban greening projects are consistent with the use of GGRF because they facilitate the reduction of GHG emissions through carbon sequestration and improving building energy conservation (HSC Section 39172(c)(1)), as well as through improving water use and supply (HSC Section 39172(c)(3)). All of the proposed urban greening projects will have public health benefits (HSC Section 39172(b)(1)), complement efforts to improve air quality (HSC Section 39172(b)(3)), direct investments toward the most disadvantaged communities in the state (HSC Section 39172(b)(4)), and lessen the impacts and effects of climate change on the state’s communities and environment (HSC Section 39172(b)(6)). The Direct Install Garden Program for Disadvantaged Communities fosters job creation by conducting job training and promoting GHG emissions reduction projects carried out by California workers (HSC Section 39712(b)(2)). These urban greening projects are also consistent with the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (HSC Section 38590.1(a)(4)), which prioritizes funding for urban greening and climate adaptation and resiliency projects.

Carbon Farming Projects

The carbon farming projects are consistent with the use of GGRF because these projects facilitate the reduction of GHG emissions associated with water use and supply, support land and natural resource management, and advance sustainable agriculture (HSC Section 39712(c)(3) and Section 38590.1(a)(3)). In addition, these projects facilitate the reduction of GHG emissions through investments in programs implemented by local agencies (Alameda County Resource Conservation District and Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County) and a Native

⁴ \$4M appropriation for the Climate Ready Program, with 5% for administrative costs.

American tribe (Pauma Band of Luiseño Indians) (HSC Section 39712(c)(6)). They also fund research, development, and deployment of innovative measures and practices (HSC Section 39172(c)(7)). The Central Coast Carbon Farms will direct investments toward the most disadvantaged communities in the state (HSC Section 39172(b)(4)), and all the projects will provide opportunities for public agencies, nonprofits and tribes to participate in and benefit from efforts to reduce GHG emissions (HSC Section 39172(b)(5)).

Watershed Restoration Projects

The watershed restoration projects are consistent with the use of GGRF because these projects facilitate the reduction of GHG emissions associated with water use and supply, and land and natural resource conservation and management (HSC Section 39712(c)(3)), and support programs implemented by nonprofit organizations coordinating with local government (HSC Section 39172(c)(6)). These projects are also consistent with GGRF funding priorities in the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 by employing climate adaptation and resiliency strategies (HSC Section 38590.1(a)(6)). In addition, the projects will lessen the impacts and effects of climate change on the state's communities and environment (HSC Section 39172(b)(6)).

Living Shorelines Projects

The living shorelines projects are consistent with the use of GGRF because these projects facilitate the reduction of GHG emissions associated with water use and supply and natural resource conservation and management (HSC Section 39712(c)(3)). They also support programs implemented by a local agency and a nonprofit organization coordinating with a local government (HSC Section 39712(c)(6)) and support the research, development, and deployment of innovative measures and practices (HSC Section 39172(c)(7)). These projects are also consistent with GGRF funding priorities by planning and implementing climate adaptation and resiliency strategies (HSC Section 38590.1(a)(6)). Both projects will direct investments toward the most disadvantaged communities in the state (HSC Section 39172(b)(4)), and lessen the effects of climate change on the state's communities, economy and environment (HSC Section 39172(b)(6)).

GGRF Investment Plan

Pursuant to HSC Section 39716, this round of Climate Ready grants are consistent with the Draft Third GGRF Investment Plan: Fiscal Years 2019-2022 (Investment Plan), which sets GGRF's funding goals. The current Investment Plan prioritizes GGRF funding for natural resources, sustainable agricultural practices, urban greening, climate adaptation and resiliency, and climate research (Investment Plan, pgs. 17-22). Pursuant to the Investment Plan, this round of Climate Ready grants are also consistent with the state's climate goals, which include improving equity, achieving environmental justice, supporting capacity building, and increasing community engagement (Investment Plan, pgs. 12-14).

GGRF Funding Guidelines

CARB is directed by the state legislature to administer the GGRF funds and to develop funding guidelines to implement the GGRF statutory regime (HSC Section 39715). Consistent with the

CARB 2018 Funding Guidelines, this round of Climate Ready grants meet the following required guiding principles for GGRF programs:

- Facilitate GHG emission reductions and further the purposes of AB 32 and related statutes
- Target investments in and benefiting priority populations, with a focus on maximizing disadvantaged community benefits
- Maximize economic, environmental, and public health co-benefits to the State
- Foster job creation and job training, wherever possible
- Avoid potential substantial burdens to disadvantaged communities and low-income communities
- Ensure transparency and accountability and provide public access to program information

Consistent with the Funding Guidelines, this round of Climate ready grants also meet the following recommended guiding principles for GGRF programs:

- Encourage projects that contribute to other State climate goals
- Coordinate investments and leverage funds where possible to provide multiple benefits and to maximize benefits

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY’S ENABLING LEGISLATION:

All of the recommended projects would be undertaken pursuant to Section 31113 of Chapter 3 of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code, which authorizes the Conservancy to address the impacts and potential impacts of climate change on resources within the Conservancy’s jurisdiction (Section 31113(a)).

Pursuant to Section 31113(b), the Conservancy is authorized to award grants to nonprofit organizations and public agencies to undertake projects that include reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and addressing extreme weather events, sea level rise, flooding, and other coastal hazards that threaten coastal communities, infrastructure, and natural resources. Consistent with this section, the proposed authorization awards grants to nonprofit organizations and public agencies to undertake the projects described in the “Project Summary” section, which maximize public benefits by facilitating the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, enhancing coastal wetlands and natural lands, reducing coastal hazards due to sea level rise, and conserving biodiversity.

The Alameda County Carbon Farms, Cooling our Communities, Markham Elementary Living Schoolyard, and Rheem Creek Restoration Area projects are within the Conservancy’s jurisdiction pursuant to Chapter 4.5 of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code, Sections 31160-31165, which authorizes the Conservancy to award grants to projects located in the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area that address the resource and recreational goals of the San

Francisco Bay area. All four projects address resource and recreational goals within the nine county San Francisco Bay area.

The Carr Lake Park and Wetlands, Natural Park at Ramona Gardens, Direct Install Garden Program for Disadvantaged Communities, Central Coast Carbon Farms, Carbon Farming at Pauma Tribal Farms, Oranges to Oaks, Tomales Bay Living Shorelines, and Los Angeles Living Shorelines projects are within the Conservancy's jurisdiction pursuant to Chapter 5.5 of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code, Section 31220, which authorizes the Conservancy to award grants for projects that undertake coastal watershed and coastal and marine habitat water quality, sediment management, and living marine resources protection and restoration. All nine projects provide water quality and/or marine resource restoration and protection within coastal watersheds.

**CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S [2018-2022 STRATEGIC PLAN](#)
GOAL(S) & OBJECTIVE(S):**

The 12 projects proposed for funding assist the Conservancy in meeting a number of its Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives. Relevant Goals and Objectives are listed below, along with the names of the proposed projects that meet each goal. Please see the "Project Summary" section, above, for how each proposed project meets the relevant goal(s) and objective(s).

All of these projects were selected to advance **Goal 8** of the Conservancy's Strategic Plan, to enhance the resilience of coastal communities and ecosystems to the impacts of climate change. Consistent with **Goal 8, Objective B**, which seeks to plan and design adaptation projects to increase resilience to sea level rise and other climate change impacts, the following proposed projects will contribute to this goal:

- Alameda County Carbon Farms
- Rheem Creek Restoration Area
- Carr Lake Park and Wetland
- Natural Park at Ramona Gardens
- Tomales Bay Living Shoreline
- Central Coast Carbon Farms
- Los Angeles Living Shoreline

Consistent with **Goal 8, Objective C**, which seeks to implement projects to increase resilience to sea level rise and other climate change impacts, the following proposed projects will contribute to this goal:

- Cooling Our Communities
- Alameda County Carbon Farms
- Direct Install Garden Program for Disadvantaged Communities

- Carbon Farming at Pauma Tribal Farms
- Los Angeles Living Shoreline
- Markham Elementary Living Schoolyard

Consistent with **Goal 6, Objective A**, which seeks to develop plans for the restoration and enhancement of coastal habitats, including coastal wetlands and intertidal areas, stream corridors, dunes, coastal terraces, coastal sage scrub, forests, and coastal prairie, the following proposed projects will contribute to this goal:

- Rheem Creek Restoration
- Tomales Bay Living Shoreline

Consistent with **Goal 6, Objective B**, which seeks to restore or enhance coastal habitats, including coastal wetlands and intertidal areas, stream corridors, dunes, coastal sage scrub, coastal terraces, forests, and coastal prairie. The following proposed projects will contribute to this goal:

- Los Angeles Living Shoreline

Consistent with **Goal 6, Objective C**, which seeks to develop plans to preserve and enhance coastal watersheds and floodplains, the following proposed project will contribute to this goal:

- Carr Lake Park and Wetland

Consistent with **Goal 6, Objective D**, which seeks to implement projects that preserve and enhance coastal watersheds and floodplains, the following proposed projects will contribute to this goal:

- Oranges to Oaks

Consistent with **Goal 7, Objective A**, which seeks to develop plans for projects that foster the long-term viability of coastal working lands, including projects to assist farmers, ranchers, and timber producers to reduce impacts of their operations on wildlife habitat and water quality, the following proposed projects will contribute to this goal:

- Central Coast Carbon Farms

Consistent with **Goal 7, Objective B**, which seeks to implement projects that foster the long-term viability of coastal working lands, including projects to assist farmers, ranchers, and timber producers to reduce impacts of their operations on wildlife habitat and water quality, the following proposed projects will contribute to this goal:

- Alameda County Carbon Farms
- Carbon Farming at Pauma Tribal Farms
- Central Coast Carbon Farms

Consistent with **Goal 12, Objective E**, the Rheem Creek Restoration Area project will develop plans for enhancement of riparian and riverine habitat or other watershed functions and processes

for the benefit of wildlife or water quality.

Consistent with **Goal 13, Objective B**, the Markham Elementary Living Schoolyard will implement a project that provides educational centers and natural play spaces.

Consistent with **Goal 14, Objective B**, the Alameda County Carbon Farms will implement projects that assist farmers and ranchers to steward the natural resources on their lands.

Consistent with **Goal 16, Objective B**, which seeks to increase the resilience to climate change impacts of communities along the coast of California or in the San Francisco Bay Area that lack capacity due to systemic inequities, the following proposed projects will contribute to this goal:

- Cooling Our Communities
- Rheem Creek Restoration
- Carr Lake Park and Wetland
- Natural Park at Ramona Gardens
- Direct Install Garden Program for Disadvantaged Communities
- Tomales Bay Living Shorelines
- Oranges to Oaks
- Carbon Farming at Pauma Tribal Farms
- Central Coast Carbon Farms
- Los Angeles Living Shoreline
- Markham Elementary Living Schoolyard

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA & GUIDELINES:

The proposed project is consistent with the Conservancy's Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines, last updated on October 2, 2014, 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. **Promotion and implementation of state plans and policies:** All projects are consistent with the 2018 Update to the *Safeguarding California Plan* (California Natural Resources Agency), which seeks to "actively engage, educate, learn from, and partner with communities to enable early, continuous, and meaningful participation in adaptation initiatives." (Goal 1, p. 33) and to "support planning and adaptation to reduce hazards and to increase the

resilience of coastal communities, infrastructure, development, and other resources” (O-1, p. 172). All of the proposed projects are also consistent with the 2015 *A Strategy for California @ 50 Million: The Environmental Goals and Policy Report* (Governor’s Office of Planning and Research), which seeks to “prioritize GHG emission reduction actions that provide climate resilience benefits, especially in the natural resource sector” (p.26).

a. Cooling Our Communities

- i. This project is consistent with the 2018 Update to the *Safeguarding California Plan*, which seeks to promote community resilience and health equity by improving underlying environmental and living conditions (P-1, p.93); educate, empower, and engage Californians to reduce vulnerabilities to climate change through mitigation and adaptation (P-2, p. 96); promote mitigation and adaptation strategies with public health and equity benefits (P-3, p. 99); and continue investing in urban forestry to expand the urban tree canopy statewide (F-5, p. 160).

b. Alameda County Carbon Farms, Carbon Farming at Pauma Tribal Farms, and Central Coast Carbon Farms

- i. These projects are consistent with the 2018 Update to the *Safeguarding California Plan*, which seeks to “advance water management and energy efficiency in agricultural operations” (A-1, p. 129) and “build soil organic matter on farms and ranches to achieve soil benefits” (A-2, p. 130).
- ii. These projects are also consistent with the 2015 *A Strategy for California @ 50 Million: The Environmental Goals and Policy Report*, which seeks to provide resources for long-term management and stewardship of agricultural and working lands to protect them for the benefit of future generations (p. 23).
- iii. The projects are also consistent with the 2016 *California Water Action Plan*, which encourages healthy soils through soil management practices (p. 15).

c. Natural Park at Ramona Gardens

- i. This project is consistent with the 2018 Update to the *Safeguarding California Plan*, which seeks to promote community resilience and health equity by improving underlying environmental and living conditions (P-1, p.93); educate, empower, and engage Californians to reduce vulnerabilities to climate change through mitigation and adaptation (P-2, p. 96); promote mitigation and adaptation strategies with public health and equity benefits (P-3, p. 99); continue investing in urban forestry to expand the urban tree canopy statewide (F-5, p. 160); and maximize opportunities to connect urban populations to natural spaces through urban parks, wetlands, and river parkways (PC-3, p. 217).
- ii. This project is also consistent with the 2016 *California Water Action Plan*

(California Natural Resources Agency), which seeks to increase the use of recycled water (p. 8).

d. Rheem Creek Restoration and Carr Lake Park and Wetland

- i. These projects are consistent with the 2018 Update to the *Safeguarding California Plan*, which seeks to promote community resilience and health equity by improving underlying environmental and living conditions (P-1, p.93); educate, empower, and engage Californians to reduce vulnerabilities to climate change through mitigation and adaptation (P-2, p. 96); increase restoration and enhancement activities to increase climate resiliency of natural lands (B-3, p.142); and maximize opportunities to connect urban populations to natural spaces through urban parks, wetlands, and river parkways (PC-3, p. 217).
- ii. These projects are also consistent with the 2015 *A Strategy for California @ 50 Million: The Environmental Goals and Policy Report*, which seeks to “build resilience into natural systems and prioritize natural and green infrastructure solutions”, as “well-maintained watersheds and floodplains can lessen flood risks resulting from variations in stream flow and timing of runoff.” (p. 23).
- iii. This project is also consistent with the 2016 *California Water Action Plan*, which seeks to protect and restore degraded stream ecosystems to assist in natural water management and improved habitat (p. 11); restore coastal watersheds (p.12); and encourage flood projects that plan for climate change and achieve multiple benefits (p. 19).

e. Direct Install Garden Program for Disadvantaged Communities

- i. This project is consistent with the 2018 Update to the *Safeguarding California Plan*, which seeks to promote community resilience and health equity by improving underlying environmental and living conditions (P-1, p.93); educate, empower, and engage Californians to reduce vulnerabilities to climate change through mitigation and adaptation (P-2, p. 96); promote mitigation and adaptation strategies with public health and equity benefits (P-3, p. 99); and continue investing in urban forestry to expand the urban tree canopy statewide (F-5, p. 160).
- ii. This project is also consistent with the 2016 *California Water Action Plan*, which seeks to promote local urban conservation programs such as incentive programs that convert lawns to drought tolerant landscapes (p.6)

f. Tomales Bay Living Shorelines

- i. This project is consistent with the 2018 Update to the *Safeguarding California Plan*, which seeks to design and implement nature-based projects to protect and enhance the adaptive capacity of coastal and marine ecosystems (O-2, p.175).

- ii. This project is also consistent with the 2015 *A Strategy for California @ 50 Million: The Environmental Goals and Policy Report*, which seeks to build resilience into natural systems and prioritize natural and green infrastructure solutions (p. 23).
- g. Oranges to Oaks
- i. This project is consistent with the 2018 Update to the *Safeguarding California Plan*, which seeks to increase restoration and enhancement activities to increase climate resiliency of natural lands (B-3, p.142); increase reforestation efforts on wildfire and pest-impacted areas (F-2, p. 154); manage forests to support statewide water infrastructure and to protect forested source watersheds (F-3, p. 156); and improve water storage capacity by using strategies such as watershed restoration (W-5, p. 199).
 - ii. This project is also consistent with the 2015 *A Strategy for California @ 50 Million: The Environmental Goals and Policy Report*, which seeks to “build resilience into natural systems and prioritize natural and green infrastructure solutions” because “forests... and other landscapes provide important carbon sequestration opportunities for California” (p. 23).
- h. Los Angeles Living Shoreline
- i. This project is consistent with the 2018 Update to the *Safeguarding California Plan*, which seeks to design and implement nature-based projects to protect and enhance the adaptive capacity of coastal and marine ecosystems, including beaches and wetlands (O-2, p.175); and maximize opportunities to connect urban populations to natural spaces through urban parks, wetlands, and river parkways (PC-3, p. 217).
 - ii. This project is also consistent with the 2015 *A Strategy for California @ 50 Million: The Environmental Goals and Policy Report* (Governor’s Office of Planning and Research), which seeks to “support landscape-scale approaches to conservation and mitigation that account for multiple benefits” (p.22). It is also consistent with the goal of building resilience into natural systems and prioritizing natural and green infrastructure solutions because wetlands provide important carbon sequestration and climate adaptation opportunities (p. 23).
- i. Markham Elementary Living Schoolyard
- i. This project is consistent with the 2018 Update to the *Safeguarding California Plan*, which seeks to promote community resilience and health equity by improving underlying environmental and living conditions (P-1, p.93); educate, empower, and engage Californians to reduce vulnerabilities to climate change through mitigation and adaptation (P-2, p. 96); promote mitigation and adaptation strategies with public health

and equity benefits (P-3, p. 99); and maximize opportunities to connect urban populations to natural spaces through urban parks, wetlands, and river parkways (PC-3, p. 217)

- ii. This project is also consistent with the 2015 *A Strategy for California @ 50 Million: The Environmental Goals and Policy Report*, which seeks to “build resilience into natural systems and prioritize natural and green infrastructure solutions” (p. 23).
4. **Support of the public:** As indicated by the support letters provided in Exhibit 3, the suite of proposed projects are supported by elected officials, numerous community and nonprofit organizations, and local agencies.
5. **Location:** All of the projects are located either within a coastal watershed or the nine-county San Francisco Bay region.
6. **Need:** Without Conservancy funding, the proposed projects would either not proceed or would have to be scaled back.
7. **Greater-than-local interest:** The projects to be funded by this authorization will improve resiliency, public access, and recreation throughout the coastal regions of the state and the San Francisco Bay Area. Over the next century the California coastal region will experience more severe impacts from the combined effects of higher air and water temperatures, altered precipitation patterns, sea-level rise, salinity changes, ocean acidification, more severe El Niño climate events, increased storm frequency and intensity, higher coastal erosion rates, saltwater intrusion, and greater fire intensity and frequency. These impacts will in turn increase vulnerabilities of our coastal infrastructure, public health and safety, and our natural resources which support our economy and a vast number of other services. They will have wide-ranging implications for coastal and inland communities alike.
8. **Sea level rise vulnerability:** Two of the 12 Climate Ready projects address the impacts of sea-level rise directly as a project goal: Tomales Bay Living Shoreline and Los Angeles Living Shorelines. Both projects will complete crucial planning steps for implementing living shorelines, which help protect against sea level rise by providing shoreline and sediment stabilization, reducing coastal erosion, buffering wave energy, and accreting sediment. None of the other projects are located in sites vulnerable to projected sea level rise.

Additional Criteria

9. **Urgency:** The longer we wait to adapt to climate change, the greater the future costs and losses will be (California’s Coast and Ocean Summary Report, Fourth Climate Change Assessment, 2018). Coastal marshes and other living shorelines that are restored today will be more resilient as sea level rises, thereby maintaining the flood protection and ecological benefits they provide. Demonstration projects such as the proposed living shorelines and carbon farming projects are needed to scale successful adaptation strategies throughout the state. Urban greening and restoration projects will help protect vulnerable communities from the extreme weather events and variable precipitation patterns that California is already experiencing. It is therefore urgent that we act now to protect our coastal communities and

economy as well as our natural resources, public health, and agricultural resources.

10. **Resolution of more than one issue:** The 12 projects recommended for funding are multi-benefit projects that use nature-based solutions to increase resilience to climate change impacts. They will provide both climate mitigation and adaptation while also helping to achieve a suite of other benefits such as watershed function, health equity, and food security.
11. **Leverage:** See the “Project Financing” section above.
12. **Readiness:** All 12 projects described in the “Project Summary” section above are ready to implement and complete within one to five years.
13. **Realization of prior Conservancy goals:** “See the “Project History” section above.
14. **Cooperation:** The Climate Ready projects are intended to foster cooperation across multiple regional and political boundaries to address the impacts of climate change. To achieve this goal multiple nonprofit organizations and federal, state, and local agencies are involved in project implementation.
15. **Vulnerability from climate change impacts other than sea level rise:** All of the proposed projects are focused on climate change adaptation or mitigation, and their goal is to increase resilience of the project area to projected climate change impacts. All of the proposed projects have thus taken vulnerabilities from other climate change impacts, other than sea level rise, into consideration throughout the design of the project.
16. **Minimization of greenhouse gas emissions:** All of the proposed projects will facilitate the reduction of GHG emissions. Please see the “Project Summary” section above.

CEQA COMPLIANCE:

Alameda County Carbon Farms

The carbon farming practices implementation for Crop Farm 1, Wente, Small Vineyard 1, Sunol AgPark and Ranch J and Ranch 2, are addressed under the *Final Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Alameda County Voluntary Local Program* (MND), adopted by the Alameda County Resource Conservation District (RCD) on August 24, 2012. A copy of the MND can be found in Exhibit 3. The MND addresses the impacts of the activities described in the Alameda County Voluntary Local Program (VLP), including riparian planting and weed management. The VLP is a program designed to encourage farmers and ranchers engaged in agricultural activities to voluntarily enhance, restore, and maintain habitat for sensitive, threatened or endangered species that benefit from habitat maintenance and agricultural activities. The proposed project is being implemented as part of the VLP.

The MND programmatically covers the Best Management Practices proposed in this project, which include focused stream restoration and rangeland management, and in particular native riparian habitat plantings and invasive and non-native plant removal practices. These are all potential carbon farming practices used in the implementation of this grant. The MND indicates

that the only potentially significant effects from implementation of stream restoration activities proposed in this authorization are in the area of Biological Resources. Mitigation measures are identified in the MND to avoid, reduce or mitigate all of the potentially significant environmental effects on biological resources. The mitigation measures include: limiting construction hours; minimizing vegetation disturbance; avoiding use of plastic mono-filament erosion control materials; avoiding animal burrows; managing removed sediment; capping pipes, culverts and similar structures; using escape ramps; using native trees/shrubs; conducting cavity/tree nesting bird surveys and ground nesting bird surveys; conducting bat surveys; limiting in-stream restoration seasonally; appropriately locating and managing equipment staging and storage; dewatering activities; avoiding rock outcroppings; limiting use of herbicides; avoiding special-status plants; and complying with all applicable permit conditions. The mitigation measures also include particular measures for protecting several special-status species and their habitats (California red-legged frog, California tiger salamander, Alameda whipsnake, San Joaquin kit fox, Longhorn fairy shrimp and Vernal pool fairy shrimp, Callipe silverspot butterfly, and San Francisco dusky footed woodrat).

The proposed project also has other implementation project elements, including implementation of composting and cover crop planting management strategies. While not directly assessed in the MND, staff has concluded that these project elements qualify as project revisions that do not require additional CEQA documentation. Under CEQA Guidelines Section 15162, additional documentation is only required after adoption of the MND if project changes, changed circumstances, or new information result in the project having new potentially significant effects or an increase in severity of previously identified effects

Here, all of the proposed project activities not assessed under the MND, such as composting and cover cropping, would otherwise be categorically exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15304 as a minor alteration to land. These crop practices are soil-beneficial practices which do not involve the removal of healthy, mature and scenic trees. The changes to the land from these practices are minimal in scope and do not affect sensitive resources. Finally, there are no unusual circumstances under Section 15300.3 of the CEQA Guidelines that might counter the assumption that the proposed additional activities would have no potential for significant effect.

Staff has independently reviewed the MND and has determined that the proposed project is within the scope of the Alameda County VLP, and is adequately described in the MND. Staff has also determined that the elements of the proposed project not included in the MND meet the criteria and requirements of the statutory and categorical exemptions discussed above, and that no additional CEQA documentation is required. Conservancy staff has concluded that, taken as a whole, there is no substantial evidence that the project, as mitigated, may have a significant effect on the environment, as defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15382.

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

Natural Park at Ramona Gardens

The proposed project is statutorily exempt from review under CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15262, which exempts planning and feasibility studies for possible future actions which have not been approved, adopted or funded. The project involves only (1) the completion of the conceptual and technical designs, and (2) assessment of information needed for environmental review for possible future actions that the Conservancy has not approved, adopted, or funded.

Upon approval, staff will file a Notice of Exemption that this proposed project is exempt from CEQA.

Central Coast Carbon Farms

The proposed project is statutorily exempt from review under CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15262, which exempts planning and feasibility studies for possible future actions which have not been approved, adopted or funded. The Central Coast Carbon Farms project will develop carbon farm plans with a focus on annual specialty crop farms, and will consider environmental factors in the course of developing these eight plans. These plans will not have a legally binding effect on later activities.

Upon approval, staff will file a Notice of Exemption that this proposed project is exempt from CEQA.

Rheem Creek Restoration

The proposed project is statutorily exempt from review under CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15262, which exempts planning and feasibility studies for possible future actions which have not been approved, adopted or funded. The Rheem Creek Restoration project will develop conceptual designs and plans for three sites along Rheem Creek, and develop 60% designs and prepare for permitting for a fourth site. Environmental factors will be considered as part of the planning for the sites.

Likewise, the proposed project is categorically exempt from review under CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15306; the topographic survey that involves minor vegetation trimming, and other studies being conducted as part of this project, involve basic data collection and resource evaluation activities that will not result in a serious disturbance to any environmental resources.

Upon approval, staff will file a Notice of Exemption that this proposed project is exempt from CEQA.

Carr Lake Park and Wetland

The proposed project is statutorily exempt from review under CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15262, which exempts planning and feasibility studies for possible future actions which have not been approved, adopted or funded. The project involves only (1) the completion of the conceptual designs for the urban park, and (2) assessment of information needed for environmental review and permit applications for possible future actions that the Conservancy has not approved, adopted, or funded. The project will consider environmental factors in its implementation.

Upon approval, staff will file a Notice of Exemption that this proposed project is exempt from CEQA.

Tomales Bay Living Shorelines

The proposed project is statutorily exempt from review under CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15262, which exempts planning and feasibility studies for possible future actions which have not been approved, adopted or funded. The project consists of conducting feasibility studies for 2-5 sites in Tomales Bay, and then developing conceptual designs for those sites, all of which will take into account environmental factors.

Upon approval, staff will file a Notice of Exemption that this proposed project is exempt from CEQA.

Cooling Our Communities

The proposed project is categorically exempt from review under CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15304, regarding minor public or private alterations to the condition of land, water and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees. The project will involve planting trees in areas that do not involve any alteration or removal of concrete on sidewalks or roads, or alteration of any existing facilities.

The proposed project also consists of training, workshops and community engagement for information collection, sharing and program development. Accordingly the proposed project is also categorically exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15306 for information collection, research, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities which do not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource, and categorically exempt from CEQA Guidelines Section 15322 for educational and training programs that do not involve physical alteration in the area affected.

Upon approval, staff will file a Notice of Exemption that this proposed project is exempt from CEQA.

Markham Elementary Living Schoolyard

The proposed project involves removing 12,000 square feet of asphalt from an existing schoolyard, and replacing it with vegetation and decomposed granite, such that the proposed project is categorically exempt from review under CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301, as a minor alteration of existing public or private structures or topographical features. The project activity is contained within the existing schoolyard, and there is no expansion of the existing schoolyard, nor expanded use of the schoolyard.

The replacement of asphalt with vegetation and decomposed granite is also categorically exempt from review under CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15304, as minor public or private alterations to the condition of land, water and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees. The removal of asphalt and replacement with vegetation does not result in a cumulative impact with a significant impact on the environment, and there is a net benefit to the environment from this project.

Upon approval, staff will file a Notice of Exemption that this proposed project is exempt from CEQA.

Direct Install Garden Program for Disadvantaged Communities

The proposed project will install 25 new gardens, will replace existing conventional landscaping with water efficient landscaping, and plant at least 24 coast live oak, without removing any existing healthy trees. The project is accordingly categorically exempt from review under CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15304, regarding minor public or private alterations to the condition of land, water and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees.

Upon approval, staff will file a Notice of Exemption that this proposed project is exempt from CEQA.

Carbon Farming at Pauma Tribal Farms

The proposed project involves implementing carbon farming practices in a pilot demonstration, including activities such as cover cropping, compost application, hedgerow installation, and no-till farming practices. These practices specifically avoid disturbing the soil, do not involve any toxic or hazardous materials, manage erosion and avoid the use of pesticides. The land is already agricultural in nature, and is not sensitive habitat. The 6,000 foot dirt and wood-chipped trail will be developed on existing disturbed agricultural land, will involve grading of less than 10%, and will not involve any construction beyond hand labor. The trail will also only be used for guided tours of the carbon farm pilot, and will not result in significant impacts from increased foot traffic or noise. Together, the trail and farming practices will have a less than significant impact to existing wildlife and the environment. Accordingly, the proposed project is categorically exempt from review under CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15304, regarding minor

public or private alterations to the condition of land, water and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees.

The proposed project also consists of gathering and analyzing data, particularly those related to soil and ground water. The project serves as a demonstration of certain cover cropping, compost application, hedgerow installation, no-till and transition practices that do not result in a major disturbance to an environmental resource. Accordingly, the proposed project is also categorically exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15306 for data collection, research, experimental management and resource evaluation activities which do not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource.

Upon approval, staff will file a Notice of Exemption that this proposed project is exempt from CEQA.

Oranges to Oaks

The proposed project will plant approximately 276 coast live oak trees and other native shrubs and grasses on 23 acres and is categorically exempt from review under CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15304, regarding minor alterations to the condition of land, water and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees. Examples of activities excluded under this exemption include minor alterations to vegetation on existing designated wildlife management areas which result in improvement of habitat for fish. The project will only remove dead orange trees, will not remove any live, healthy trees, and will result in net benefits to the wildlife habitat.

Upon approval, staff will file a Notice of Exemption that this proposed project is exempt from CEQA.

Los Angeles Living Shorelines Restoration Project

The proposed project is categorically exempt from CEQA review under CEQA Guidelines Section 15333 as a small habitat restoration project of less than 5 acres that assures the maintenance, restoration, enhancement, or protection of habitat for fish, plants, or wildlife. The terrestrial component of this project consists of the utilization of existing sediments to passively restore and transform approximately 3.5 acres of sandy beach habitat into a sustainable coastal strand and dune habitat complex. The project does not involve moving any sediment to or from outside of the project site, and will only involve hand labor without the use of mechanical tools. The eelgrass restoration component of this project is approximately 1 acre, and will sustainably harvest eelgrass shoots from donor beds, consistent with regulations. There are no rare or endangered species located at the project site; accordingly, consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15333(a), there would be no significant adverse impact on endangered, rare or threatened species or their habitat pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15065. The project site does not contain any hazardous materials, and the project only involves moving sand and planting eelgrass. Consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15333(b), there are no hazardous materials at or around the project site that would be disturbed or moved. Finally, this project is a stand-

alone project at the project site, and consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 51333(c), will not result in impacts that are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects. The project would result in a beneficial impact on wildlife.

Upon approval, staff will file a Notice of Exemption that this proposed project is exempt from CEQA.