

COASTAL CONSERVANCY

Staff Recommendation  
February 3, 2022

**SUNSET NATURAL RESILIENCE PROJECT**

Project No. 21-074-01  
Project Manager: Moira McEnespy

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Authorization to disburse up to \$555,000 to San Francisco Estuary Institute to prepare designs, design recommendations, and/or guidance documents for the Sunset Natural Resilience Project, six urban greening, wildlife connectivity corridor, and dune restoration projects in the western portion of the City and County of San Francisco.

**LOCATION:** Western portion of the City and County of San Francisco (see Exhibit 1)

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EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1: [Project Location and Project Area Maps](#)

Exhibit 2: [Letters of Support](#)

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**RESOLUTION AND FINDINGS**

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

Resolution:

The State Coastal Conservancy hereby authorizes a grant of an amount not to exceed five hundred fifty-five thousand dollars (\$555,000) to San Francisco Estuary Institute (“the grantee”) to prepare designs, design recommendations, and/or guidance documents for the Sunset Natural Resilience Project, six urban greening, wildlife connectivity corridor, and dune restoration projects in the western portion of the City and County of San Francisco.

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

1. A detailed work program, schedule, and budget, including provisions for acknowledging Conservancy funding.
2. Names and qualifications of any contractors to be retained in carrying out the project.

Findings:

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

1. The proposed authorization is consistent with Chapter 3 of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code, regarding the Climate Ready Program.
2. The proposed project is consistent with the current Conservancy Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines.
3. San Francisco Estuary Institute is a nonprofit organization organized under section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code.

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## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

### PROJECT SUMMARY:

Staff recommends the Conservancy authorize a grant of an amount not to exceed \$555,000 to San Francisco Estuary Institute (“SFEI”) to prepare designs, design recommendations, and/or guidance documents for the Sunset Natural Resilience Project, six urban greening, wildlife connectivity corridor, and dune restoration projects in the western portion of the City and County of San Francisco (see Exhibit 1). The purpose of each of the six projects is to increase the ability of human and natural communities to adapt to and prepare for the impacts of climate change. The projects will further biodiversity goals whilst making a dense urban environment a more livable, enjoyable, and resilient space.

Context: Once regarded as biological deserts, there is growing evidence that cities can support surprisingly high levels of biodiversity (Faeth et al., 2011; Kowarik, 2011; McKinney, 2008; Spotswood et al., 2021). Connectivity across the landscape—features that facilitate the movement of plants and animals—is one of the most important elements driving biodiversity in cities; therefore, greenspace linkages are critical. Landscape connection features can include corridors (thin stretches of greenspace that promote linear movement) and stepping stones (sets of discrete but nearby greenspace areas that together promote connectivity) that link habitats and populations to one another, allow movement among different habitat types, and connect terrestrial and aquatic resources.

Addressing Need: The six proposed projects are located within an approximately 4,150-acre area bounded by the Pacific Ocean to the west and Sunset Boulevard to the east, and including the city’s major open spaces from Fort Funston/Lake Merced to Golden Gate Park to Lands End to the Presidio (“the overall project area;” see Exhibit 1). Although significant, these open spaces are currently highly isolated. The proposed projects will therefore work together to increase connectivity and reduce physical barriers (e.g., roads, impervious surfaces, gaps in tree canopy cover). Creating better ecological connectivity across Western San Francisco will enable this area of unique dune, wetland, and shrubland habitats to function more effectively for an array of native wildlife. The multiple resilience benefits of interventions such as expanded canopy cover, native plantings, multi-layered vegetation, urban heat reductions, and

stormwater management are amplified when these interventions are applied to many sites throughout the urban environment, rather than to one-off projects.

Description: The six projects located in the overall project area (see Exhibit 1) are currently in various stages of planning, but need technical guidance to ensure they are designed in a way that maximizes climate adaptation benefits and urban biodiversity, and incorporates locally-appropriate, site-specific ecological guidance. Design elements that support urban biodiversity include increasing the number and size of greenspace areas, increasing connectivity, adding habitat features in the urban areas outside of greenspaces that support ecological processes and wildlife movement, incorporating habitat diversity/mosaics, using native plant vegetation, supporting unique habitat features necessary to support species' life history requirements (e.g., large trees, wetlands), and appropriate ongoing management. The project partners have asked SFEI to provide technical guidance, specifics of which are described below for each project. [Note: Facts about urban biodiversity in this section were taken from "Making Nature's City: A science-based framework for building urban biodiversity" (SFEI Publication #947, September 2019)].

There are three urban greening projects for which SFEI will prepare designs or design recommendations:

Giannini Middle School Green Infrastructure Project: The San Francisco Public Utilities Commission ("SFPUC") and San Francisco Unified School District ("SFUSD") are planning an urban greening capital project to address flooding (currently experienced in both the parking and play areas), and surface temperatures on school grounds during heat waves. The project consists of installing green infrastructure for stormwater management and planting trees for urban cooling over eight acres of what is currently impervious surface. SFEI will prepare designs for the project based on appropriate target ecosystems rooted in historic ecology; and that include ecologically functional and resilient tree palettes, and native plant palettes appropriate for stormwater infrastructure. SFEI's work is anticipated to be conducted winter 2022 through summer 2023.

Sunset Boulevard Biodiversity Corridor: In partnership with the California Native Plant Society ("CNPS") and Climate Action Now!, a nonprofit organization that builds ecological resilience by removing pavement to create organic gardens, the San Francisco Department of Public Works ("SF Public Works") is implementing sections of the Sunset Boulevard Master Plan, which seeks to enhance a transportation corridor such that it provides multiple benefits (ecological, habitat, recreational, biodiversity, educational) along an approximately two and a half mile section from Irving Avenue to Ulloa Boulevard. The Sunset Boulevard corridor contains over 40 acres of open space in its collective medians, and connects some of the city's major open spaces: Golden Gate Park, Lake Merced, and Fort Funston. Activities to-date have included some initial native tree planting, and installation of rain gardens to improve stormwater management; planned projects include nature play spaces and community gardens. SFEI will prepare design recommendations for which native plants and trees should be planted, how to achieve habitat connectivity (e.g., the optimal and maximum distances between green spaces along the corridor in order to maintain habitat functionality), and how to reduce transportation/automobile disturbance to wildlife. SFEI's

work is anticipated to be conducted from spring to fall in 2022, and SF Public Works is currently securing additional design and implementation funding.

Ramaytush Ohlone Garden Restoration: The San Francisco Recreation and Park District (“SF Rec & Park”) and the Associated Ramaytush Ohlone (“ARO”) are collaboratively designing a garden on approximately five acres at the west end of Golden Gate Park that has been recognized for some time as having significant habitat restoration potential.

In 2021, ARO began leading conversations in collaboration with SF Rec & Park, the newly-founded (March 2020) American Indian Cultural District, and the American Indian Cultural Center to explore a management model that supports tribal leadership and use. ARO seeks to establish the garden as a model for indigenous stewardship, and intends for the garden to serve the larger American Indian and indigenous community. SFEI will prepare landscape design recommendations for the garden that address: A plant palette that is coordinated with the larger Golden Gate National Park and Outer Sunset biodiversity strategy; how to incorporate one of the park’s lakes (Middle Lake) into the resilience design; how to incorporate historical ecology with indigenous uses; and the appropriate target ecosystem types and focal wildlife species. SFEI will include specific expertise in California ethnobotany and coastal flora. As part of the design recommendations, SFEI will provide ecological guidance for how this new high-value habitat area can contribute to ecological functions and connectivity along the Great Highway corridor and extending into Golden Gate Park. This information will enable the tribal and city partners to design the garden as part of the surrounding ecological network, with focal habitat types and wildlife species, and in support of cultural management practices. Conservancy funding will also help support ARO’s participation in developing SFEI’s design recommendations. SFEI’s work is anticipated to be conducted winter 2022 through winter 2023. SF Rec & Park will contribute staff time, and has secured \$6.4M as part of the 2012 San Francisco Parks Bond that it will apply towards future project implementation.

There are three additional planning projects for which SFEI will prepare designs or design guidance:

Wildlife Connectivity and Western San Francisco Quail Reintroduction: California Quail were once abundant in both the Presidio and Golden Gate Park, but have rapidly declined since the 1990s; they were last seen in each location in 2006 and 2018, respectively. Recent work by SFEI and the Presidio Trust found that lack of connectivity was one of the strongest predictors of quail’s ability to persist in an urban park (Iknyan et al. *in review*). In addition to the California Quail, which the Presidio Trust is currently considering for reintroduction, multiple species of urban wildlife would benefit from enhanced connectivity. As the city’s Climate Action Plan identifies regional partnerships as critical components of maintaining urban wildlife corridors, SFEI, with input from Presidio Trust and other partnering agencies, will prepare science-based guidance on wildlife connectivity requirements and barrier removal across western San Francisco. Connections through Lands End, Golden Gate Park, and the Great Highway corridor, as well as potential inland corridors such as Sunset and Park Presidio Boulevards will be explored. The resulting guidance will be accompanied by

recommendations for specific projects to increase wildlife connectivity. SFEI's work is anticipated to be conducted spring/summer 2022 through winter 2023.

Ocean Beach Dune Restoration and Great Highway Revisioning: Since the 1990s, Ocean Beach has experienced chronic erosion at its southern end which threatens the city's wastewater infrastructure and portions of the adjacent Great Highway (see "Site Description," below). In response, extensive interagency and public process led to the 2012 Ocean Beach Master Plan ("OBMP"), a comprehensive vision to address sea level rise, protect infrastructure, restore coastal ecosystems, and improve public access. Note that the Conservancy previously authorized \$700,000 towards the plan's development and implementation. The OBMP identifies five overarching actions along three reaches. Work across the reaches is interdependent (therefore goals for each reach are summarized below); SFEI's work will focus on the Middle Reach.

In the South Reach (south of Sloat Boulevard), the SFPUC is leading implementation of two OBMP overarching actions: Reroute the Great Highway inland of the San Francisco Zoo between Skyline and Sloat Boulevards; and introduce a multipurpose coastal protection, restoration, and access system. Actions include working with SF Rec & Park to construct new portions of the California Coastal Trail (construction anticipated to begin in 2023). Actions also include carrying out the specific Ocean Beach Climate Adaptation Project: Short-term solutions of beach nourishment ("sand backpassing" from the north end of the beach to the south end) and placement of sandbags where the beach fronts the Great Highway; ongoing beach nourishment (placement by the US Army Corps of Engineers of sand dredged from the San Francisco Bay Main Channel onto the beach instead of offshore; first placement completed in summer 2021); and long-term solutions such as managed retreat of the Great Highway (actions currently under environmental review; construction anticipated in 2023).

In the Middle Reach (Sloat Boulevard to Lincoln Way), the OBMP recommends dune restoration, which will require addressing continued shoreline erosion, the presence of non-native dune-stabilizing vegetation, dunes that have been significantly altered (e.g., bulldozed flat), and migration of windblown sand onto the Great Highway. In addition, this reach of the Great Highway was temporarily closed to vehicular traffic as a COVID-19 pandemic response, and City planning agencies are now exploring future planning scenarios that include permanent partial and full closure of vehicular traffic on this reach, thus continuing heavy bicycle and pedestrian use (see "Site Description," below). To assist agency partners (San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency, SF Rec & Park, the National Park Service), SFEI will develop designs for dune management pilot projects that address the dune restoration issues, and can be feasibly implemented in this narrow urban footprint. The designs will incorporate updated sea level rise projections, flood hazard maps, and groundwater projections; lessons learned from the sand backpass operations which take sand from the North Reach and place it at the South Reach; as well as consider potential reconfiguration of the Great Highway corridor in the North and Middle Reaches. SFEI's work is anticipated to be conducted spring/summer 2022 through summer 2023.

In the North Reach (Lincoln Way to 48<sup>th</sup> Avenue), the OBMP recommends creating better connections between Golden Gate Park and Ocean Beach, and introducing bicycle and pedestrian improvements north of Balboa Street. In 2017, SPUR released an Ocean Beach Open Space Design Summary that generally mentioned native dune restoration and fencing.

Finally, SFEI will incorporate the design guidance they develop for each of these six projects into a citywide guidance document that the City can use in the future when designing projects to implement resolutions, policies, and goals that seek to promote biodiversity and use nature-based solutions but do not contain the level of detail necessary to design projects to achieve the stated aims. The guidance document will underpin implementation of the San Francisco Biodiversity Policy (2011) and Goals (2017), the 2014 Urban Forest Plan, and recent 2021 Climate Action Plan.

**Site Description:**

The overall project area is an approximately 4,150-acre area in western San Francisco bounded by the Pacific Ocean to the west and Sunset Boulevard to the east, and including the city's major open spaces from Fort Funston/Lake Merced Park to Golden Gate Park to Lands End to the Presidio (see Exhibit 1).

A major feature of the overall project area is **Ocean Beach**, a narrow 3.5-mile stretch of sand along San Francisco's rugged Pacific coast. It draws a diverse population of more than 300,000 visitors each year and is an important piece of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area; it is also home to major elements of San Francisco's wastewater and stormwater infrastructure (including the Oceanside Treatment Plant and the Lake Merced Tunnel, a fourteen-foot diameter pipe under the Great Highway). Ocean Beach is a challenging setting, with storm-driven waves contributing to erosion of coastal bluffs, and situated such that immediately-adjacent urban areas limit opportunities for managed retreat. As climate change causes sea levels to rise, erosion is expected to worsen, further threatening coastal infrastructure like roads and sewers, and causing the beach to narrow.

Adjacent to Ocean Beach is the **Great Highway**, a 3.8-mile-long roadway running from Skyline Boulevard at Fort Funston/Lake Merced in the south to Point Lobos Ave at the Cliff House in the north (see photo in Exhibit 1) The two-mile Upper Great Highway segment, between Sloat Boulevard and Lincoln Way, includes roadways, paths, and dunes. The Great Highway is a city roadway under the jurisdiction of SF Rec & Park, which in April 2020 closed the Upper Great Highway to vehicle access during the COVID-19 pandemic in order to provide enhanced outdoor space for safe recreation. This closure essentially created a 17-acre park with a two-mile public promenade that can accommodate higher volumes of use than the adjacent pathways, and offers recreational access to the beachfront to people who cannot easily use the beach itself. During the past six months, an average of 82,000 monthly visitors rolled and strolled along the car-free corridor; a record-breaking day in January 2021 saw 11,600 visitors access the road in a single day; and over 6,000 visits were counted on Saturday, August 28, 2021 [The Great Highway Project | San Francisco Recreation and Parks, CA (sfrecpark.org)]. In August 2021, SF Rec & Park instituted partial closure to vehicular access; on weekdays it is a roadway with an adjacent trail, and on weekends and holidays it again becomes a park.

On the eastern edge of the overall project area is the **Sunset Boulevard corridor**, which contains nearly 40 acres of open space in its collective medians, and connects some of the city's major open spaces: Golden Gate Park, Lake Merced, and Fort Funston.

In the approximate center of the overall project area sits **Giannini Middle School**. This public school includes approximately eight acres of mostly impervious roofs and pavement. There is minimal green space; over 2.5 acres of play yard immediately adjacent to Sunset Boulevard is entirely paved, and there are large strips of unplanted ground around the school recreation areas and entrance. The event spaces include a courtyard, seating area, and paved P.E. courts, which are all largely unshaded. The project site also includes a large, impervious parking lot.

Finally, the **Ohlone Garden site** is located in the southwest corner of Golden Gate Park, adjacent to MLK Jr. Way and Bernice Rodgers Way. The site is currently composed of a barren staging area with a surrounding vegetated area of Monterey cypress and non-native trees (see photo in Exhibit 1)

**Grant Applicant Qualifications:** SFEI is a non-profit organization with over 20 years of experience managing state contracts. SFEI maintains a finance team on staff that includes contracts, bookkeeping, and accounting expertise; they also employ Deltek accounting software to manage billing at the appropriate project and task levels. SFEI has a record of success completing a number of similar multi-year urban ecology and shoreline resilience projects. Examples include "The San Francisco Bay Shoreline Adaptation Atlas" (completed in 2019 in partnership with SPUR, funding from the Regional Water Quality Control Board), "The Sunnyvale Shoreline Resilience Vision" (ongoing, with funding from Valley Water and Google), "Next-Generation Urban Greening" (ongoing, funded by the Environmental Protection Agency), "Quail in Urban Parks" (completed, funding from the Presidio Trust), and incorporation of urban ecology into the new "Moffett Park Specific Plan." SFEI will contract with recognized local coastal/dune engineering and ecology experts for the Ocean Beach and Ramaytush Ohlone Garden projects.

#### **CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA:**

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

##### **Selection Criteria**

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

See the "Consistency with Conservancy's Strategic Plan" section below.

**2. Project is a good investment of state resources.**

The recommended project furthers two recent California initiatives; and although statewide in scope, implementation of both reflect regional circumstances and discuss strategies and actions at the regional level. The Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy identifies priority nature-based solutions in which lands can deliver on climate change goals.

Consistent with the San Francisco Bay Region priorities identified in the Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy October 11, 2021 Draft Report, the recommended project includes “green communities—urban parks, green schoolyards, green infrastructure” and “corridor protection to facilitate range shifts,” and includes opportunities to increase equity in the region by expanding the use of community greening to reduce the impacts of pollution, and by increasing tribal capacity to scale climate smart land management. The state’s 30x30 Executive Order of October 2020 seeks to combat the biodiversity and climate crises by conserving 30% of California’s lands and coastal waters by 2030. In addition to nature-based solutions and natural areas/working lands, achieving this goal should also take into account building climate resilience in urban greenspaces. Consistent with this order, the recommended project seeks to increase connectivity in an urban landscape, which is one of the most important elements driving biodiversity in cities. In addition, the recommended project will be undertaken at the request of a suite of collaborating federal and local agencies/departments to ensure that project and sub-regional biodiversity goals will be achieved, and will leverage significant matching funds. The recommended project therefore provides important benefits to Californians and is a good investment of state resources.

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

See the “Ramaytush Ohlone Garden Restoration” project description, above.

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

Planning and designs for each of the recommended projects will reflect anticipated conditions over the project life span. For example, designs at the Giannini Middle School site will factor in the elevated risk of storm-related flooding and inundation from stormwater given the school grounds are located within the 100-year flood zones for San Francisco (SFPUC, 100-year Storm Flood Risk Map). Designs for the Sunset Boulevard Biodiversity Corridor will accommodate incorporation of an anticipated future recycled water line such that it enhances water sustainability for the project as a whole.

In all applicable instances, SFEI guidance will identify locally native trees and plants that are more likely to be resilient to the local climate, as well as extreme heat and drought conditions.

In the Ocean Beach area, long-term shore change is dependent upon the rate of sea-level rise, the amount of sand placement, and the effectiveness of sand trapping. SFEI will review and apply updated sea level rise projections, flood hazard maps, and groundwater projections since the 2012 OBMP (e.g. FEMA Coastal Flood maps for existing conditions, Our Coast Our Future – CoSMoS maps for future conditions, City and County of SF guidance). They will use applied geomorphology methods to quantify increased shore recession forced by higher sea levels. Sand budget calculations will adjust net shore change based on sand supply, and shore profiles will be used to update estimates of the extent of future erosion and flooding in the project area and the volume of sand placement needed. The trapping of

placed sand will also be improved using a sand management approach based on native dune species which will be more sustainable and resilient than the current system of mechanical excavation, relocation, and grading.

**5. Project delivers multiple benefits and significant positive impact.**

The purpose of the recommended project is to increase the ability of human and natural communities to adapt to and prepare for the impacts of climate change. The recommended project will further biodiversity goals by preparing designs, design recommendations and guidance that will enable project partners to implement projects that will increase connectivity and appropriate habitat types; support urban wildlife corridors and eventual species re-introduction; implement urban greening; enhance drought tolerance and water retention; restore dunes whilst taking into account the most updated sea level, flood hazard, and groundwater projections; co-create a park design with tribal groups; make a dense urban environment a more livable, enjoyable, and resilient space; and integrate essential design guidance into multiple plans.

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

The recommended actions for Ocean Beach, the Great Highway, Sunset Boulevard, and for wildlife/quail reintroduction build from Master Plans or the city’s Climate Action Plan— planning processes (in some cases, multi-year) that included robust public input and engagement; furthermore, activities at Ocean Beach continue to be informed by a multi-entity coordination group. The Ramaytush Ohlone Garden will be co-developed with input from tribal communities. See letters of support from project partners in Exhibit 2.

**PROJECT FINANCING**

<b>Coastal Conservancy</b>	<b>\$555,000</b>
SFPUC (for Giannini Green Infrastructure)	\$1,700,000
SF MTA (for Great Highway) - pending	\$840,000
SF Public Works (for Sunset Boulevard) - pending	\$200,000
<b>Project Total</b>	<b>\$3,295,000</b>

Conservancy funds are anticipated to come from FY2018/19 and FY2019/20 appropriations to the Conservancy from the “California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018” (Prop 68, Public Resources Code Division 46, Chapters 1-13, Sections 80000-80173). In particular, Chapter 10 of Prop 68 allocates funds to the San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy Program for projects to improve a community’s ability to adapt to the unavoidable impacts of climate change; improve and protect coastal and rural economies, agricultural viability, wildlife corridors, or habitat; develop future recreational opportunities; or enhance drought tolerance, landscape resilience, and water retention. (Pub. Res. Code sections 80130 and 80133(b)).

The recommended project is within the San Francisco Bay Area Program and will be undertaken pursuant to the Climate Ready Program established in Chapter 3 of the Conservancy's enabling legislation. The project purpose is to increase the ability of human and natural communities to adapt to and prepare for the impacts of climate change, including increased heat, and more severe coastal and beach erosion exacerbated by sea level rise. The project will further statewide biodiversity goals by preparing designs, design recommendations and guidance that will enable project partners to increase connectivity and appropriate habitat types; support urban wildlife corridors and eventual species re-introduction; implement urban greening; enhance drought tolerance and water retention; design for dune restoration whilst taking into account the most updated sea level, flood hazard, and groundwater projections; co-create a park design with tribal groups; and make a dense urban environment a more livable, enjoyable, and resilient space. The recommended project is therefore consistent with the intended funding source.

Other funds for the Giannini Green Infrastructure work have been secured; funds for the Great Highway and Sunset Boulevard Biodiversity Corridor work are anticipated to come from upcoming City and County of San Francisco program budgets and ballot measures later this year. The City and Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy will also contribute staff time for the Ohlone Garden, Ocean Beach restoration, and western wildlife corridor design work. Unless specifically labeled "Required Match" the other sources of funding listed above are provided as estimates. The Coastal Conservancy does not typically require matching funds nor does it require documentation of expenditures from other funders. Typical grant conditions require grantees to provide any funds needed to complete the project. Note that investment in the planning and design is anticipated to leverage in excess of \$13M of implementation funds.

The proposed project was selected through a competitive grant process under the Conservancy's "Proposition 68 Guidelines San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy Program - Climate Adaptation Funds" adopted August 22, 2019. The proposed project meets the evaluation criteria in the Proposition 68 Guidelines as described in detail in this section, the "Project Summary" section above, and in the "Consistency with Conservancy's Project Selection Criteria" section above.

**CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S ENABLING LEGISLATION:**

Section 31113 of Chapter 3 of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code authorizes the Conservancy to address the impacts and potential impacts of climate change on resources within the Conservancy's jurisdiction (Section 31113(a)). The recommended project will address resources within the Conservancy's jurisdiction because it will be undertaken within the City and County of San Francisco, one of the nine counties of the San Francisco Bay Area (Chapter 4.5 of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code).

Section 31113, subsections (b) and (c) authorize the Conservancy to award grants to nonprofit organizations and public agencies to undertake projects including those that address extreme weather events, sea level rise, flooding, and other coastal hazards that threaten coastal communities, infrastructure, and natural resources. Consistent with this section, the recommended project will prepare designs, design recommendations or guidance for projects that will address extreme heat through urban greening and green infrastructure (Giannini

Green Infrastructure Project, Sunset Boulevard Biodiversity Corridor, Ramaytush Ohlone Garden), provide nature-based solutions in the form of dune restoration to help address sea level rise (Ocean Beach dunes restoration, Great Highway revisioning), and address loss of biodiversity associated with climate change by increasing urban biodiversity (Sunset Boulevard Biodiversity Corridor, wildlife/quail reintroduction).

Section 31113(c) states that the Conservancy must prioritize grants for projects that maximize public benefits and have one of several purposes, including reducing emissions of greenhouse gases, preserving and enhancing natural lands, conserving biodiversity, and providing recreational opportunities. Consistent with this section, the recommended project maximizes public benefits (see the “Consistency with Conservancy’s Project Selection Criteria” section above) and seeks to enhance natural lands (Ocean Beach coastal dunes, Ramaytush Ohlone Garden), conserve and promote biodiversity (Sunset Boulevard corridor; wildlife/quail reintroduction), and enhance recreational opportunities (Ramaytush Ohlone Garden, Great Highway revisioning).

Section 31113(d) states that when allocating funds made available pursuant to Chapter 10 of Proposition 68 the Conservancy shall prioritize projects that (A) use natural infrastructure, (B) provide multiple public benefits, and (C) give consideration to projects in a variety of ecosystems. Consistent with this section, the recommended project will provide design for natural infrastructure (Giannini Green Infrastructure Project, Ocean Beach dunes restoration) and will provide multiple public benefits (see the “Consistency with Conservancy’s Project Selection Criteria” section above). The projects will also occur in a variety of ecosystems including dune habitat, open space park habitat, and urban habitat.

Section 31113(d)(2) requires that the Conservancy provide information to the Office of Planning and Research (OPR) on any projects funded pursuant to this subdivision. Consistent with this section, the Conservancy will provide relevant information to OPR.

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

Consistent with **Goal 8, Objective B** of the Conservancy’s 2018-2022 Strategic Plan, the proposed project will plan and design adaptation projects to increase resilience to climate change impacts.

Consistent with **Goal 15, Objective C** of the Conservancy’s 2018-2022 Strategic Plan, the proposed project will help achieve conservation, climate adaptation, and public access objectives through science-based technical assistance to inform innovative, multi-objective projects.

**CEQA COMPLIANCE:**

The recommended project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) under Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, Section 15306 because it involves information collection and resource evaluation for possible future action, and there will be no disturbance to an environmental resource.

The project is also statutorily exempt from CEQA under Section 15262 because it involves planning studies and feasibility analyses for possible future actions that the Conservancy has not approved, adopted, or funded, and will include consideration of environmental factors.

Upon approval of the project, Conservancy staff will file a Notice of Exemption.