January 26, 2022

Doug Bosco, Chair
State Coastal Conservancy
1515 Clay Street, Suite 1000
Oakland, CA 94612

Re: Support for the Carmel River Floodplain Restoration and Environmental Enhancement (CRFREE) Grant Application

Dear Chairman Bosco:

I am writing to request your board’s support for the County of Monterey’s grant application to fund the Carmel River Floodplain Restoration and Environmental Enhancement project (CRFREE). The grant will ensure the construction of this project, as it will constitute the matching funds required to obtain hazard mitigation funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

The CRFREE project will facilitate the restoration of approximately 92 acres of critically needed floodplain on the lower portion of the Carmel River owned by the Big Sur Land Trust (BSLT). The BSLT has an outstanding track record of natural lands management and restoration, making them an ideal organization to oversee the land after the County of Monterey has completed the project. This beneficial project will restore the floodplain to its natural state while also significantly reducing the flood risk to the surrounding residential and commercial communities.

In addition to serving as a floodplain, CRFREE will promote the recovery of the federally endangered South-Central California Coast (SCCC) steelhead population by re-establishing the natural biological processes lost when the floodplain was cut off from the main channel for farming in the late 19th century. The Carmel River and its tributaries are listed as a Core 1 watershed under the NOAA’s Steelhead Recovery plan, underscoring the project’s impact on the surrounding communities and natural ecosystem.

Thank you for your consideration of this very worthy project. Please feel free to contact me at (831) 649-2832 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Mark Stone
Assemblymember, 29th District