



November 30, 2018

Luisa Valiela
EPA Region 9, Watersheds Office (WTR-2-2)
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

Re: Support for American Rivers' Three Creeks Parkway Restoration Project and Application to the US Environmental Protection Agency San Francisco Bay Water Quality Improvement Fund

Dear Ms. Valiela,

Earth Team would like to express our support for American Rivers' grant application to the EPA's San Francisco Bay Water Quality Improvement Fund for the Three Creeks Parkway Restoration Project to restore floodplain and riparian habitat along more than 4,000 linear feet of Marsh Creek, expand the creek channel to provide increased flood protection, and improve water quality in Marsh Creek and the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

Earth Team is interested and excited to partner with American Rivers and other project partners to engage local high school students to plant native plants, remove invasive plant species, map and remove litter using NOAA's Marine Debris Tracker App, assess water quality, and help with long-term maintenance of native vegetation at the project site. Earth Team is currently working with a team from Antioch High School and the Contra Costa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District to maintain a creek restoration project in the Upper Sand Creek Basin, upstream of the Three Creeks site in the Marsh Creek Watershed. With additional project funding, Earth Team will set up a new program at Freedom High School in Oakley and have a team of 14 students dedicated to the Three Creeks Project with 3-5 visits per month during the school year.

Marsh Creek is an important natural resource that flows 30 miles from the eastern slope of Mt. Diablo through the communities of Brentwood and Oakley and into the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, the water supply for over 20 million people. Marsh Creek provides habitat for numerous sensitive aquatic species including Chinook salmon, red-legged frog, and western pond turtle. However, relatively high temperatures combined with low dissolved oxygen levels have likely contributed to seven fish kills on Marsh Creek since 2005.

This multi-benefit project is expected to help alleviate severe water quality problems by restoring floodplain that will provide shade, lower water temperatures, and moderate algae production and nutrient removal. The project proposes to improve the ecological functions of the creek by reducing flow velocities, creating wetlands, and restoring riparian habitat. Although much of the watershed has been constrained by urbanization, the Three Creeks Parkway Restoration project site is the longest remaining stretch of undeveloped land along the creek where there is still an opportunity to widen the channel and provide a more natural creek system that is connected to the historic floodplain.

We urge you to support this worthwhile project. Feel free to contact me at joelle@earthteam.net or by phone at (925) 588-8460 if you have any questions or would like more information.

Sincerely,

Joelle Alley, Program Manager

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