



**Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Board of Directors**

**June 27, 2018**

**6:30 pm – 8:30 pm**

**Location: La Honda Pescadero Unified School District Community Room  
360 Butano Cut-Off Road, Pescadero, CA 94060**

Directors present: Barbara Kossy, TJ Glauthier, Jim Reynolds

Staff present: Kellyx Nelson, Lau Hodges

Guests: Aimee Armsby, Ken Schwarz, Jim Robins, Dante Silvestri, Ron Sturgeon

**1. Call to Order**

Meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m. The building was locked, so directors called the meeting to order outside in front of the building.

**2. Approval Agenda**

- Nelson asked to pull agenda item 5.3.
- Reynolds moved to approve the agenda as amended. Motion passed unanimously.

**3. Introduction of Guests and Staff**

All in attendance introduced themselves to the group.

**4. Public Comment**

- Silvestri expressed concern that the meeting was not well noticed.
  - Glauthier asked Silvestri if he had any comments about the Butano Channel Reconnection project. Silvestri stated he did not.
- Nelson commented that she had just come from a carbon farm planning workshop hosted by the RCD at TomKat Ranch in which she thanked the RCD's Board of Directors who took a leadership role in the state several years ago, bringing forward a resolution to CARCD to engage with climate related issues. Multiple RCDs signed on to that resolution and carbon farm planning is now a major program area of focus for RCDs across the state.

**5. Regular Agenda**

**5.1.** Board will consider Resolution 2018-3: San Mateo Resource Conservation District as the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (Pub. Resources Code, § 21000 et seq.) regarding the Butano Creek Channel Reconnection and Resilience Project Approving the Mitigated Negative Declaration and Adopting the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.

- Because the meeting was held outside, the attached PowerPoint could not be shown. Nelson summarized the presentation and asked that it be distributed with the meeting minutes.
- Sturgeon stated that the MND meets his approval and the Board should approve it. He further stated that he loved the quality of work and that the MND is better than any EIR he has seen.

- Robins stated that the RCD took the work very seriously.
- Sturgeon stated that a MND is better than an EIR. Silvestri agreed.
- Nelson reviewed project goals and objectives.
- Robins reviewed project timeline and phases. He commended the RCD for choosing to go above and beyond with public meetings and responses to the comments, neither of which were required by law.
- Nelson noted that RCD staff had provided updates at most PMAC meetings, made the information available on the RCD's website, hand delivered notices to peoples' homes in Pescadero, posted information at the Pescadero post office, sent emails to a distribution list, and utilized multiple local social media (Facebook, NextDoor, and a Pescadero Google Group), in addition to public meetings of the Board of Directors.
- Nelson explained that this is a project for the community and the RCD wanted to engage the community. Therefore, the comments the RCD received largely contained no surprises because the public had been highly involved to date.
- Nelson explained that RCD received comments in writing and at a public meeting, held on May 17, 2018. The public meeting was not a requirement of the CEQA process. Nelson stated that 56 letters were received, 51 of which stated their support for the project, via a simple sentence of support. The RCD did not spend time responding to those letters.
- Nelson reviewed and summarized comments and RCD responses to comments from each of the following:
  - The California Department of Fish & Wildlife
  - Caltrans
  - San Mateo County
  - Committee for Green Foothills
    - Nelson stated that she and Robins spent time on the phone with Lennie Roberts, and appreciated how thoroughly Roberts had read the document and the time that went in to crafting the letter.
- There was discussion among guests, staff and directors about various topics including how equipment will be brought in, turtles in the marsh, phasing of the work, vegetation removal, how this project interacted with other efforts (County dredging in the right of way, restoration planning for the marsh, upstream floodplain restoration, breaching of the sandbar).
  - Robins stated that the San Mateo County dredge permit still exists and if a 100-year storm comes after the RCD's project is complete, the county can still go in and dredge.
- There was discussion about a commenter's concern about loss of riparian forest. Robins explained that by definition a riparian area is land by a stream and there is currently no stream or stream edge anymore. By rebuilding the creek channel the edge of the creek would be recreated which will be better for birds, frogs and snakes; an outcome with benefits that outweigh the removal of trees in the long run. Robins stated that the RCD had spoke to the Department of Fish & Wildlife

early in the project and both agencies agreed that, ecologically, bringing back water circulation and the fauna that rely on it is beneficial.

- Nelson noted the risk of no action in the status quo.
- Robins confirmed that cape ivy had been spotted and treated during early scouting of the site.
- Sturgeon asked about the Committee's concerns regarding tree canopy. Robins explained that the trees will quickly fill in.
- Schwarz commented that the memo documents in detail the responses that were summarized by Nelson. He added that there must be substantial evidence for requesting an EIR and that was not present in the comments the RCD received. Schwarz also pointed out that the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP), which is included in the memo, takes all the best practices and reporting requirements and puts them in one place for easy reference.
- Silvestri noted that the condition of the banks before they were designated for public use and recreation and asked if the end goal was to have a trail for recreational use. Nelson stated she had not heard of any such condition or plan and it was not part of this project. Robins stated that the levy will be maintained.
- Silvestri asked where funding for the project will come from. Nelson stated that funding will come from National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, California State Parks and San Mateo County.
- Silvestri pointed out that contractors can be hard to come by in this economy. Nelson confirmed that was why the RCD was starting the bid process early and likely with a bid bond. Robins stated that the bid process would be casting a wide net.
- Kossy moved to pass Resolution 2018-3: San Mateo Resource Conservation District as the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (Pub. Resources Code, § 21000 et seq.) regarding the Butano Creek Channel Reconnection and Resilience Project Approving the Mitigated Negative Declaration and Adopting the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program. Reynolds seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**5.2.** Board will consider authorizing expenditures through July 31, 2018.

- Kossy moved to authorize expenditures through July 31, 2018. Reynolds seconded. Motion passed unanimously

**5.3.** ~~Board will consider contracting with Express Plumbing and Underground Construction for Design Build Pescadero Creek Streamflow Improvement Project at Memorial Park.~~

**Adjourn**

Meeting was adjourned at 7:22 p.m.



# Butano Creek Channel Reconnection and Resilience Project CEQA Process



Lead Agency: San Mateo Resource Conservation District

June 27, 2018



# Outline

1. Brief Project Overview
2. Project Timeline
3. CEQA Objectives/Requirements
4. Initial Study (IS)
5. CEQA Next Steps





# Project Objectives



1. Restore access to 10.1 mi of Butano Creek for steelhead and coho salmon via improved fish passage.
2. Reduce flooding at Pescadero Creek Road.
3. Improve salmonid survival:
  - creating access to oxygen-rich freshwater refuge during times of low water quality; and
  - reducing anoxic conditions by preventing percolation and movement of freshwater from Butano Creek through and across the marsh.

# Project Area and Overview



# Project Overview

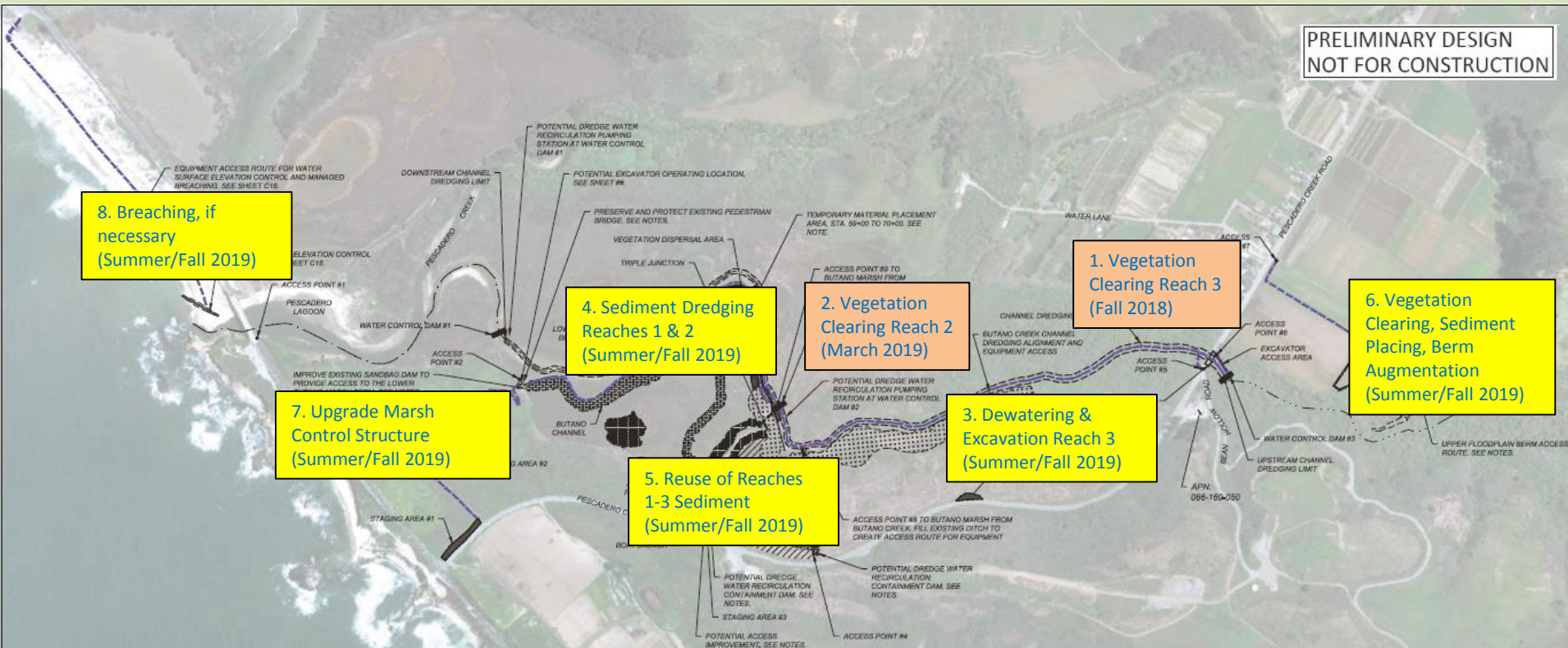


1. Dredging and excavation of ~46,300 cubic yards of sediment from Butano Creek channel (7,400 linear feet).
2. Beneficial reuse of sediment in Butano Marsh to fill artificial open water areas (drainage channels, isolated pools, relic borrow pits) and construct natural levee analog along upper reach of Butano Creek (Reach 3)..
3. Berm augmentation upstream of Pescadero Creek Road to increase controlling elevation of right bank floodplain.
4. Marsh control structure (existing sandbag dam) upgrades
5. Mechanical breaching for water quality, if necessary





# Project Construction Overview



# Project Timeline



1. PLANNING: Complete CEQA, complete 100% designs and specs, obtain permits (**Summer 2018**)
2. PHASE 1: Vegetation clearing in Reach 3 (**Fall 2018**).
3. PHASE 2: Vegetation clearing in Reach 2 (March 2019).
4. PHASE 3: (Summer/Fall 2019).
  - Sediment excavation in Reach 3 and dredging in Reaches 1 & 2
  - Beneficial reuse of sediment in Butano Marsh.
  - Upstream floodplain berm augmentation activities.
  - Upgrade marsh control structure.
  - Mechanical breaching of lagoon mouth, as-needed, to maintain water levels during dredging activities.

## California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA):

- Disclosure to public and decision-makers the significant environmental effects of proposed activities.
- Identify ways to avoid/reduce potentially harmful effects.
- Consideration of alternatives and application of feasible mitigation (if necessary).
- Public disclosure of agency decision making and reasons for approval if there are significant effects.
- Foster inter-agency coordination and include public participation in planning process.



# CEQA Initial Study Sections



- Aesthetics
- Air quality
- Biological resources
- Cultural resources
- Geology and soils
- Greenhouse gas emissions
- Hazards and hazardous materials
- Hydrology and water quality
- Land use and planning
- Noise
- Recreation
- Transportation/Traffic
- Tribal cultural resources
- Public services
- Utilities
- Cumulative impacts

**FINDING: NO SIGNIFICANT, UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS**

# CEQA Process



1. RCD publish Public Draft IS/MND, with draft Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP), and public notices (NOI, NOC) (May 3, 2018).
2. Public review period (30 days).
3. RCD/Horizon holds public meeting in Pescadero to solicit input on the Public Draft IS/MND (May 17, 2018).
4. RCD considers public comments on IS/MND and develops "response to comments" memo.
5. RCD Board considers comments and approval of IS/MND, adoption of MMRP, and approval of project.
6. RCD/Horizon files NOD.

# CEQA Decision-making Process



**Publish IS/MND  
and Notice of  
Intent**  
May 2018

**30 Day Public  
Review Period**  
May-June 2018

**Consider Public  
Comments on  
IS/MND**  
June 2018

**SMRCD Board  
Considers  
IS/MND and  
MMRP**  
June 2018

**File NOD**  
June 2018