

AGENDA
REGULAR MEETING
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT

Tuesday, November 15, 2022

D. BUSINESS BEFORE THE BOARD

2. BOARD AND STAFF REPORTS

- b. Authorization to Transfer Funds in the Amount of \$220,000 from Existing Appropriations and Enter into an Agreement with Point Blue Conservation Science to Manage a Youth Engagement and Restoration Pilot Program at Brushy Peak Regional Preserve Griffing/Robertson/Alvarez

RECOMMENDATION

The General Manager recommends that the Board of Directors:

- 1. Authorize the transfer of existing appropriations in the amount of \$220,000 to Restore Brushy Peak (558900); and
- 2. Authorize the execution of a contract with Point Blue Conservation Science to manage a youth engagement and restoration pilot program at Brushy Peak Preserve

REVENUE/COST

The Pilot Program will cost \$220,000 over the course of four years. A recent independent analysis of the STRAW program through the Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) grant process determined the program's benefit/cost ratio of \$14.22: \$1, based on creek revegetation and water quality improvement alone.

The majority (\$200,000) of the pilot project will be funded through the Park District's Climate Smart Initiative Mini Grant Program (101 2010 000 5835). An additional \$20,000 will be allocated from the General Manager's budget (101 2010 000 6191) to support tribal partnerships.

BACKGROUND

The East Bay Regional Park District (Park District) and Point Blue Conservation Science (Point Blue) have been exploring opportunities to collaborate to help advance the Park District's core mission while accelerating climate-smart conservation and protection of biodiversity on public lands in the East Bay. The best opportunity to meet this shared goal was found through Point Blue's Students and Teachers Restoring A Watershed Program (STRAW) and the Park District's Wildland Vegetation Unit in the Stewardship Department. After exploring various regional public lands, Brushy Peak Regional Reserve (Brushy Peak) was chosen as a pilot site to launch a climate-

smart restoration project, because of its ecological need, proximity to existing school, tribal community partnerships, and public accessibility.

Point Blue STRAW Program Description

Point Blue Conservation Science is a science-based non-profit organization with a mission to advance the conservation of birds, wildlife, and ecosystems through science, partnerships, and outreach. Point Blue's 160 scientists work to reduce the impact of climate change, habitat loss, and other environmental threats while developing nature-based solutions to benefit both wildlife and people.

STRAW is a Point Blue collaborative program that connects schools, community members, businesses, government agencies, public land managers, indigenous communities, and private landowners to restore local ecosystems. For thirty (30) years, STRAW has been engaging and educating Bay Area students and communities about science, conservation, and water quality through hands-on ecological restoration projects, outreach, and classroom lessons. To date, STRAW has worked with more than 45,000 students to restore over thirty-five (35) miles of riparian habitat. Each year, STRAW works with about 120 teachers and 4,000 Bay Area students on more than 70 restoration workdays.

Brushy Peak Restoration Pilot Program

The Park District is intending to contract with Point Blue Conservation Science to accelerate the advancement of climate resiliency, enhance biodiversity, and address social equity through a four-year pilot restoration program at Brushy Peak Regional Reserve (Pilot Program). Pilot Program goals include restoring native plant species cover, habitat function and resilience to climate change throughout the project areas while allowing Point Blue to authentically engage the local community by providing local students with place-based education.

This work will also be conducted in collaboration with the Alameda County Resource Conservation District, which will include technical training, quality control, supervision, and all necessary tools and safety equipment. Point Blue staff from the STRAW Program will provide full-service restoration project management and implementation at Brushy Peak, including climate-smart project design, student and volunteer education and training, implementation, maintenance, monitoring and reporting.

Two restoration sites have been chosen in the central and southern portions of the park (see attached map); a drainage and a wetland area. This is a critical habitat restoration project given the lack of intact riparian habitat in and around Brushy Peak.

Point Blue staff will also work with students and community volunteers to implement restoration projects during the first two years of the Pilot Program through hands-on workdays led by Point Blue staff. Also, during the first two years and in addition to hands-on educational workdays for students, STRAW educators will deliver classroom lessons focused on water quality, macro invertebrates, biodiversity, watershed science, food webs, and more – all designed to provide students with a greater understanding and appreciation for natural resource conservation. Classroom lessons also help students prepare for hands-on restoration workdays, which reinforce stewardship principles learned in the classroom.

In line with the State of California's 30x30 Conservation Initiative framework to incorporate equitable and authentic engagement in conservation work, this project will prioritize meaningful engagement and consultation with indigenous tribal communities. Point Blue will develop a paid contract agreement with tribes culturally affiliated with the project area that describes their role in supporting the restoration project. Tribal support is to be determined based on the goals and priorities of the tribe. This could include activities such as sharing knowledge about natural resources and the history and cultural significance of Brushy Peak during workdays or classroom visits, or potentially creating an apprenticeship for tribal youth to assist with the implementation and stewardship of the restoration.

ANALYSIS

The Pilot Program will be funded through the Park District's Climate Smart Initiative Mini Grant Program for a total amount of \$220,000, which is consistent with the grant's goals to operationalize the Board of Directors' Climate Policy Framework for Managing Park Resources in a Changing Climate (Board Resolution No. 2018-04-081). Specifically, the proposed pilot restoration program will lead climate-smart practices to enhance habitat to protect biodiversity at this important regional reserve by pioneering a project that integrates adaptation with multiple benefits including, extending educational component; engaging school students and teachers on hands-on restoration; and engaging tribal community representatives. The proposed scope of work expands and accelerates environmental restoration and stewardship, consistent with California's 30x30 Pathways.

ALTERNATIVES

None recommended.

EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT

RESOLUTION NO.: 2022 – 11 –

November 15, 2022

AUTHORIZATION TO TRANSFER FUNDS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$220,000 FROM
EXISTING APPROPRIATIONS AND ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH POINT BLUE
CONSERVATION SCIENCE TO MANAGE A YOUTH ENGAGEMENT AND RESTORATION
PILOT PROGRAM AT BRUSHY PEAK REGIONAL PRESERVE

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors of the East Bay Regional Park District adopted Board Resolution No. 2018 - 04 – 081 establishing a policy framework for managing park resources in a changing climate; and

WHEREAS, the East Bay Regional Park District Climate Smart Initiative Mini Grant Program was established in 2018 to operationalize the Board's commitment to addressing climate change by providing resources to expand work to enhance climate resiliency; and

WHEREAS, innovative demonstration projects that reduce water, energy, and waste, restore ecosystems, and mitigate climate hazards such as drought and wildfire have been funded through the Climate Smart Initiative Mini Grant Program since 2018; and

WHEREAS, the Climate Smart Initiative Mini Grant Program is aligning its goals with the State of California's 30x30 goal to conserve thirty percent of the state's lands and coastal waters by 2030 while prioritizing restoration, climate resiliency, equity, access, and authentic engagement; and

WHEREAS, the East Bay Regional Park District (Park District) and Point Blue Conservation Science (Point Blue) have identified a collaborative pilot restoration project at Brushy Peak Regional Preserve that aligns with the goals of the Park District and 30x30, including engagement with local schools and indigenous communities; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the East Bay Regional Park District hereby authorizes a transfer of \$220,000 from the Park District's Climate Resiliency Smart Initiative Mini Grant Program (101 2010 000 5835) to the Restore Brushy Peak Stream (No. 558900) as noted in the attached Budget Change Form; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the East Bay Regional Park District hereby authorizes a transfer of \$20,000 from General Manager's budget (101 2010 000 6191) to the Restore Brushy Peak Stream (No. 558900) as noted in the attached Budget Change Form; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the East Bay Regional Park District hereby authorizes a contract in the amount of \$220,000 with Point Blue Conservation Science to manage a youth engagement and restoration pilot program at Brushy Peak Regional Preserve; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the General Manager is hereby authorized and directed, on behalf of the District and in its name, to execute and deliver such documents and to do such acts as may be deemed necessary or appropriate to accomplish the intentions of this resolution.

Moved by Director _____, seconded by Director _____, and
adopted this 15th day of November, 2022 by the following vote:

FOR:

AGAINST:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT: