



February 24, 2005

Jennifer Bitting *via Fax 788-3509*
Regional Water Quality Control Board
895 Aerovista Place, Suite 101
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

RE: SEP Project Opportunities in Cambria

Dear Jennifer,

Thank you for contacting the Land Conservancy to request input on Supplementary Environmental Projects in the Cambria area. The Conservancy has several ongoing projects in the area that would benefit from funding through an SEP and offer benefits to Santa Rosa Creek.

Santa Rosa Creek is recognized as one of the most important streams on the central coast for southern steelhead trout, a species listed as "Threatened" by the federal government. Efforts are underway in the Santa Rosa Creek Drainage to improve habitats and migration access for spawning fish. Based on our knowledge of the stream system and current restoration efforts, the Land Conservancy would suggest 2 high priority projects for any available funds.

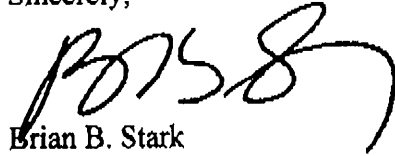
The first project is the creation of a watershed enhancement plan. Despite Santa Rosa Creek's importance, there is no long range plan that identifies known problems, maps problem areas, and describes enhancement opportunities. Plans such as these are critical to assuring that restoration funds and efforts are placed on priority problems. They are also important for securing funds for enhancement work. The Land Conservancy has authored several of these plans, most notably the San Luis Obispo Creek Watershed Enhancement Plan. A watershed enhancement plan will facilitate extensive restoration efforts and will have long lasting benefits to Santa Rosa Creek. The Land Conservancy is capable of producing this report for \$50,000.

A second project is improvement of fish passage at Ferasci Rd. This project will have the single largest benefit to steelhead trout in Santa Rosa Creek. The road crossing impedes access for fish migrating to upstream spawning areas. The existing crossing also alters sediment transport in the creek. The Land Conservancy is currently working under a grant from the California Coastal Conservancy to design and permit a project that will restore fish passage and a natural stream channel at that location. An estimated \$400,000 will be necessary for construction of the project. Local watershed groups are supporting a grant request to the California Department of Fish and Game for implementation funds. SEP funds would be used to match the grant for construction. Construction of that project would most likely happen in 2006. We would recommend that any funds allocated for this project be held with a non-profit group until such time as the project can be

implemented. The Land Conservancy is amenable to assisting with the funding even if we are not directly involved with the construction.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on potential SEP project in the Cambria area. It would be our desire to have any SEP funds remain in the community for the betterment of local resources. If you would like any additional information regarding these projects please contact me and I will prepare more detailed descriptions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Stark", with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Brian B. Stark
Executive Director