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October 16, 2012

Regional Board Members and Staff Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board 895 Aerovista Place, Suite 101 San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

Subject: Supplemental Environmental Project (SEP) Staff Report and Proposed Recommendations

Dear Board Members and Staff,

Introduction

The Regional Water Management Foundation proposes that the Santa Cruz Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP) should become a vehicle for receiving Supplemental Environmental Project (SEP) funding for projects within the Santa Cruz IRWM area (approximately 85% of the County). The Santa Cruz IRWMP provides a mechanism for objective-based identification of high-priority water resources projects, including water quality projects. These objectives are in alignment with Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board's (CCRWQCB) vision of healthy watersheds and meet the State Water Resources Control Board's (SWRCB) SEP policy. In addition, SWRCB and CCRWQCB staff continue to be supportive and active in implementation of the Santa Cruz IRWMP. The following provides additional detail in support of utilizing the Santa Cruz IRWMP as a mechanism for allocating SEP funds within the Santa Cruz region.

Santa Cruz IRWMP Background

In 2005, local agencies collaborated on the development of an initial IRWMP for the Santa Cruz region. The IRWMP identified approaches and specific projects to address the region's water quality, water supply, and resource stewardship needs. Development of the IRWM Plan helped secure a competitive \$12.5 million grant awarded by the SWRCB for the implementation of high-priority water quality and water resource projects between 2008 and 2013. More than fifty projects have implemented with the support of this grant. In 2011, the Department of Water Resources awarded a \$1M IRWM planning grant to support an update of the IRWMP to remain current.

The Santa Cruz IRWMP includes strategies for developing and implementing policies and projects to ensure sustainable water use, reliable water supply, improved water quality, improved flood protection, storm water management, and environmental stewardship. The IRWMP provides a collaborative planning process to foster communication, strengthen partnerships, support long-term planning, and provide a process to solicit, evaluate, and implement projects that yield multiple benefits for water quality, water supply, and natural resources. The goal of this effort is to meet the region's water quality and water resource needs while providing for long-term sustainability and protection of environmental resources.

Santa Cruz IRWMP participants include a range of governmental and non-governmental organizations with authority or interest in water and water-related issues. Participants and stakeholders include water quality, water supply, flood management, storm water, wastewater, land use agencies, resource agencies, research institutions, agricultural organizations, environmental organizations, business groups, watershed groups, federal, state, and local agencies, and other interested parties.

Work is currently underway to update the Santa Cruz IRWMP to ensure that the Plan remains current in addressing the range of water resource challenges in the region. Among other topics, the update will expand on the existing Plan to include new planning elements in the state's IRWM Plan Standards. In addition, an education

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and outreach component is included to solicit input from stakeholders and improve stakeholder knowledge on high priority water quality, and other water resource issues of the region. The Plan includes a process to identify and evaluate priority projects to ensure an inclusive, transparent, analytical decision-making process. The IRWM partner agencies have also been developing a conceptual framework for objective-based project prioritization and effectiveness assessment. The framework consists of a model for each focus area of the IRWM Plan (water quality, water supply, aquatic ecosystems and flood / stormwater management) that identifies management strategies to achieve resource objectives and methods by which implementation of these strategies will be assessed. Outreach efforts during the Plan Update will ensure that interested organizations and individuals have the opportunity for comment and participation in the IRWM Plan development and implementation.

Water Quality Issues Identified in the IRWMP

The primary pollutants in Santa Cruz waterways include sediment, nutrients and pathogens. Sediment sources include historic and existing road networks, construction sites, timber harvest activities, agricultural lands, and landscapes altered by natural disturbances. Bacteria and nitrate originate from septic and sewer systems, livestock, storm drains and agricultural operations. These pollutants have a variety of adverse impacts on aquatic ecosystems and organisms. Sediment and other pollutants degrade riparian and in-stream habitat and contribute to the decline in local fish populations. Pollutants increase treatment costs for potable water supply. Bacteria and other pollutants pose human health hazards and, when levels exceed health standards, can result in beach closures which limit recreational opportunities and impacts the local economy.

The Santa Cruz IRWM Plan identifies strategies and specific measures to protect and improve surface and groundwater quality. The water quality objectives of the Plan include (in no specific order):

- 1. Protect and maintain unimpaired and high quality waters
- 2. Reduce pollutant loads to surface waters, groundwater basins and the ocean
- 3. Reduce the volume and increase the quality of urban and agricultural runoff
- 4. Strengthen regional monitoring and analysis programs, and evaluate management effectiveness

Stormwater and Flood Issues Identified in the IRWMP

The Santa Cruz IRWMP promotes stormwater and flood management to protect public health and safety, property, water quality, and hydrologic function. Stormwater from urban areas is known to carry nutrients, pathogens, metals, sediment, and other pollutants that impact the surface water, groundwater, and near-shore ocean water. In addition, urban stormwater is a significant contributor to the hydro-modification impacts to the local streams and drainages. Objectives of the flood and stormwater management effort include (in no specific order):

- 1. Implementing LID strategies that reduce runoff volume or delay peak flows
- 2. Protecting, restoring and enhancing hydrological function of wetlands, streams and their floodplains
- 3. Implementing flood management efforts that balance protection from flood damage with protection of environmental values
- 4. Minimizing damage to infrastructure and property from flooding

Water Quantity and Supply Issues Identified in the IRWMP

The overwhelming majority of Santa Cruz County's water supply is locally derived from groundwater and surface water sources – a unique situation in a state supported by large federal and state water projects. Santa Cruz County waters provide drinking water for residents and visitors, critical habitat to numerous threatened and endangered species and opportunities for recreational and commercial activities. Like many other areas of

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California, the County faces water resource challenges including impaired water quality, insufficient water supply, over-drafted groundwater basins, protecting groundwater recharge areas, depleted in-stream flow, and degraded riparian habitat. Balancing demand with environmental and other uses is a challenge that requires a collaborative effort among all the region's stakeholders. The water supply objectives of the Santa Cruz IRWMP include (in no specific order):

- 1. Increasing groundwater recharge and protection of groundwater recharge areas
- 2. Reducing per capita water demand and increasing agricultural efficiency
- Providing reliable supply to meet current and expected demand after reasonable conservation and curtailment
- 4. Increasing operational flexibility with inter-district transfers and diversification of water supply portfolios

Watershed Stewardship Issues Identified in the IRWMP

Santa Cruz County watersheds play a fundamental role in local water supply and provide essential natural services that support the region's residents, economy, and diverse natural ecosystems. In addition to the intrinsic value of watersheds and the flora and fauna they support, functioning watersheds provide a wide variety of ecosystem services (e.g., water purification; flood attenuation) that offer significant benefits to humans. Healthy, functioning watersheds improve the quality of runoff which benefits aquatic communities in local waterways, benefits beach water quality and recreational opportunities, and benefits marine life in Monterey Bay. The Santa Cruz community has a long history of working to better understand, enhance, and protect this region's natural resources and biodiversity. The Watershed Stewardship objectives of the IRWMP build upon these past efforts and include strategies to (in no specific order):

- 1. Protect, enhance and restore ecological functions of rivers, wetlands and coastal lagoons
- 2. Protect and enhance habitats for sensitive species
- 3. Minimize erosion and sedimentation
- 4. Improve opportunities for open space, trails and parks consistent with environmental protection, public use and property rights

CCRWQCB's High Priority Issues

Based on CCRWQCB documents from July 11, 2012 and December 11, 2009 the CCRWQCB's priorities include (in no specific order):

- 1. Prevent and Correct Threats to Human Health
- 2. Prevent and Correct Degradation of Aquatic Habitat
- 3. Prevent Degradation of Hydrologic Processes
- 4. Prevent/Reverse Seawater Intrusion
- 5. Prevent Further Degradation of Groundwater Basins from Salts
- 6. Increase recycled water use by 1 Million AFY by 2020, and 2 Million AFY by 2030 (over 2002 baseline)
- 7. Increase Storm water use by 500,000 AFY by 2020 and 1 Million AFY by 2030 (over 2007 baseline)
- 8. Increase water conservation in urban and industrial uses by at least 20% by 2020 (over 2007 baseline)

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Consistency and Alignment of Santa Cruz IRWM with CCRWQCB Priorities

The Santa Cruz IRWMP identifies the pollutants of primary concern in the region, their sources, and the pollutant reduction strategies. The IRWM Plan identifies specific water quality projects that enhance the beneficial uses of local waterways and provide benefit to the public. There is agreement between elements of the Santa Cruz IRWMP and numerous statewide plans and policies, these include:

- 1. Healthy watersheds: the Santa Cruz IRWMP conceptual framework identifies key attributes that mirror the Board's measurable goals for healthy watersheds. This include human health threats, especially nitrate in groundwater
- 2. Aquatic habitat degradation: improving water quality to support beneficial uses, and improving the quality and quantity of aquatic habitat are all key attributes of the Santa Cruz IRWMP
- 3. *Hydrologic processes:* reducing directly connected impervious area through low impact development techniques is a key Santa Cruz IRWM strategy. This include strategies to increase urban stormwater capture, use, and recharge by implementing LID.
- 4. Seawater intrusion: the Santa Cruz IRWMP establishes targets for supply and demand with the intent of increasing groundwater storage and stream baseflow especially from groundwater over-draft and reduced recharge
- 5. *Groundwater quality:* groundwater protection is addressed through several of the Santa Cruz IRWMP conceptual models, quantity, and recharge
- 6. *Increasing recycled water use and conservation:* the Santa Cruz IRWMP identifies supply targets for alternative water supply (e.g., recycling, water transfer, desalination)
- 7. Education, outreach and stakeholder involvement: all of these are elements of the Santa Cruz IRWM development and implementation

Additional Benefits of this Proposal

- 1. The Santa Cruz IRWM Program is coordinated by the Regional Water Management Foundation (RWMF), a subsidiary of the Community Foundation Santa Cruz County, a non-profit with the institutional capability to administer, manage, track, and report on funding from multiple sources. The RWMF has successfully managed and administered a \$12.5M IRWM grant from the SWRCB, and is currently also administering a \$1M IRWM planning grant from the Department of Water Resources. A separate account can be established for administering and tracking the SEP funding.
- 2. Using the Santa Cruz IRWM Program meets the SWRCB's SEP policy criteria. If required, the nexus criteria could be further defined on a case-by-case basis.
- 3. This proposal will only use SEP Funding on IRWM projects that are consistent with the CCRWQCB's priorities, and are approved in writing by the Executive Officer or Board, as appropriate.
- 4. The Santa Cruz IRWM Program will use a transparent and inclusive process to identify priorities for SEP funding consistent with CCRWQCB's priorities.
- 5. This proposal will only be an option for SEP funding generated within the jurisdictional area of the Santa Cruz IRWMP, unless the CCRWQCB chooses to include funding generated in a larger geographical area.

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In summary, the consistency between the Santa Cruz IRWMP and CCRWQCB's objectives and the administrative capability of the RWMF make utilizing the Santa Cruz IRWMP a logical and efficient pathway for implementing SEP projects. A partial list of Santa Cruz IRWM projects is included for your reference.

Thank you for considering this request, and if you need any additional information or have questions please contact any of the members of the IRWM Steering Committee listed below or Tim Carson at the Regional Water Management Foundation.

Sincerely,

Ralph Miljanich, Board President

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Regional Water Management Foundation

Enclosure: Partial list of Santa Cruz Integrated Regional Water Management projects

IRWM Steering Committee:

Karen Christensen, Executive Director Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County kchristensen@rcdsantacruz.org; 831-464-2950

John Ricker, Water Resources Director County of Santa Cruz Environmental Health Services john.ricker@co.santa-cruz.ca.us; 831-454-2750

Bill Kocher, Director City of Santa Cruz Water Department bkocher@cityofsantacruz.com; 831-420-5200

Partial List of Santa Cruz County IRWM Projects

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			1			Wate	r Supply	1		Water	Quality	1	V	Vatershed	d Resourc	es	Floor	d and Sto	mwater I	/Igmt.		I	11.00	I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I	1	11003	1		
Project Title	Project Description Pr	roponent	Contact	Estimated Cost	Reduce per capita water demand and increase agricultural efficien cy	Provide reliable supply to meet current and expected demand after reasonable conservation and curtailment	Increase operational flexibility and inter-district transfers and diversify water supply portfolios	Increase groundwater recharge and protect groundwater recharge areas	Reduce pollutant loads to surface waters, groundwater basins and the ocean	Protect and maintain unimpaired and high quality waters	Reduce the volume and increase the quality of urban and agricultural runoff	Strengthen regional monitoring and analysis programs, and evaluate management effectiveness	Implement projects that protect, enhance and / or restore ecological functions of rivers, wetlands and coastal lagoons	Protect and enhance habitats for sensitive species	Minimize erosion and sedimentation	Improve opportunities for open space, trails and parks consistent with environmental protection, public use and property rights	Implement flood management efforts that balance protection from flood damage with protection of environmental values	Implement land management strategies that reduce runoff volume or delay peak flows	Minimize damage to infrastructure and property from flooding	Protect, restore and enhance hydrological function of wetlands, streams and their floodplains	Drought preparedness	Use and reuse water more efficiently	Climate change response actions	Practice Integrated Flood management	Expand Environmental stewardship	Protect surface water and groundwater quality	Improve tribal water and natural resources	Ensure Equitable Dist. Of benefits	
Stormwater LID	lestablishment of incentive and repate programs at local agencies, conduct a policy review for	D / Ecology Action	Karen Christensen / Kirsten Liske	\$1,000,000	х				x	x	x	x			х		x		x		x	х	x	x	х	х		x	
Integrated Watershed Restoration Program (IWRP) from San Vicente to Watsonville Sloughs	The mission of IWRP is to facilitate & coordinate planning and implementation of multi-objective projects that improve fish & wildlife habitat and water quality using a voluntary, non-regulatory approach. As IWRP as evolved over the past 7 years, the program has expanded to integrate larger and more complex objectives into our restoration projects including stormwater management and water supply reliability. The suite of projects within this proposal address everything from coho salmon habitat improvement projects on San Vicente Creek to repair of the Soquel Flume to support both lagoon function and tourism in the City of Capitola , to a complex project involving restoration of freshwater marsh, floodwater management, and water quality improvements in the Watsonville Sloughs, to sediment reduction in the San Lorenzo TMDL	RCD	Karen Christensen	\$1,080,000	x	х		х	x	х	х		х	x	х		x		х	х		х		х	х	х		x	
San Lorenzo River Watershed Riparian Conservation Easement Pilot Program	and anadromous fisheries recovery. The project also includes development of restoration priorities for the selected riparian zones, and identification of future restoration partners and funding sources for long-term easement or license maintenance and monitoring.	ity of SC	Chris Berry	\$100,000				х	х	х	х		х	х	х	х	х	х	х	х				х	х	х			
Agricultural Water Quality and Quantity in the Watsonville Sloughs	Pilot Project, Managed Aquifer Recharge Project, and Hoophouse Run-off Catchment Pilot Projects.	RCD	Nik Strong- Cvetich	\$600,000				х	х	х	х		х		х					х		х			х	х			
LID Demonstration Projects	The proposed project is the implementation of Low Impact Development (LID) measures that cail be retrofitted into the existing County government facilities at 701 Ocean Street in Santa Cruz, California. Measures that will be considered for this project include: porous pavement, biofilters (e.g. swales, biorentention, buffer strips, landscape planter box), rainwater reuse, soil amendments, disconnected downspouts, drought tolerant planting in place of turf, green roofs, tree planting, solar panel installation and others. These facilities should serve to benefit stormwater quantity and quality leaving the site and entering the San Lorenzo River. This projec will also provide highly visible demonstrations of how LID components can be incorporated into existing site design.	unty DPW	Rachel Fatoohi	\$750,000					х		х						х	х			х	х		х	х	х			
Stormwater Allocation Program (SWAP) for Santa Cruz County	In order to meet State mandated stormwater hydromodification requirements, new development and redevelopment is required to offset any increases in stormwater runoff. Normally, this is achieved using on-site controls. However, a significant number of projects do not have the space/capacity onsite to meet this requirement. The ability to utilize offsite facilities to meet the hydrogradification requirement would benefit water quality, groupdwater recharge, and	RCD	Angie Stuart	\$600,000				х	х	х	х	х	х		х		х	х	x	х	х	х	x	х	x	х			

Partial List of Santa Cruz County IRWM Projects

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	T	1	T	T		Water Supply Water Quality Watershed Resources							es	Flood	and Storr	mwater I	Mgmt.		I	1	- Trogram references							
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Sediment Load and Pesticide Reduction Projects on Roads within 150ft of Perennial Waters		County DPW	Connie Silva	\$587,000				x	х	х	х		х	x	х					x				х	х	х		
Urban and Rural Pesticide Monitoring	The Coastal Watershed Council (CWC) submits this application for "Urban and Rural Pesticide Monitoring" as a project to be included in the Santa Cruz IRWMP. This aspect of water quality monitoring is a logical complement to conventional water quality parameters that IRWM partners regularly monitor. This project includes staff time for field monitoring, training of volunteers in protocols specific to pesticides, and outreach to educate about sources and impacts of pesticides. Monitoring of this class of chemicals is often eliminated from monitoring budgets due to the high cost of lab analysis of pesticides. While agriculture is often identified as a source of pesticides, much of the public fails to recognize the sources of pesticides into local waterways from urban and non-ag rural lands. CWC would conduct monitoring and public outreach specifically targeted to organochlorine and organophosphate classes of pesticides, which are consistent with a number of IRWM parnters' goals.	Coastal	Greg Pepping	\$215,453					х	х	х	x	х	х	х	х									х	х		х
Bay Creek Median Stream Restoration and Watershed Enhancement.	Perform restoration work on Bay Creek located between N&S bound lanes of Bay Street betwee Escalona & Nobel in the City. The project includes stream restoration & creek path improvements. Addresses stormwater sources of nonpoint pollution and manages storm water runoff and sediment loads into stream, Neary Lagoon & the Bay. Install diffusers on storm drains to lessen sediment loads, water pressure and scouring, stabilize banks for roadway and creek support lessening sediment load & failure potential. Slow storm water flows and recharge groundwater. Filter stormwater prior to entry into creek thereby improving water quality. Create new weirs and rock catchment ponds, install erosion control measures and remove non-native species, replacing them with native juncus willows and riparian tree canopy, and restore ecological functions. Restore overall hydrologic function. Improve existing public creekside pedestrian path and improve access to this unique environmental resource.	City of SC	Leslie Keedy	\$800,000					x	x	x		x	х	х	х	x		x	x				x	х	x		
Repair Erosion and Increase Infiltration at Faculty Housing Outfall above High Street	Project includes diverting storm water flows from an existing storm drain outfall into two new bioswales to increase infiltration. Project will repair erosion in existing channel. Overflow from storm water not diverted to bioswales will continue down armored swale into two new bioretention areas.	UCSC	Courtney Trask	\$322,210					х	х	х				х		х	х				х		х				
Enhancing water conservation incentive program region wide through incentives	water users in the area, and then leveling the playing field of incentives region-wide so that they can be more simply promoted and advertised and priced appropriately to increase uptake. Sites would be selected for the enhanced rebates based on their overall water use and how their actual use compares with a water budget for the site.	SqCWD	Kirsten Liske / Karen Christensen / Ron Duncan	\$549,000	х			x	х		х				х		х			х	х	х	x	х	х	х		
Urban Pollution Prevention Program and Schools	The goal of the Model Schools Program is to decrease the negative effects of urban non poin source pesticide, nutrient and sediment pollution into impaired water bodies and the Monterey Bay from school site operations by implementing water quality site plans, BMPs and LIDs at model sites and providing training and technical assistance to school staff, administration, students, landscapers and the general public. A key benefit that can be leveraged from the model sites is the demonstration of success and awareness of water quality practices, thus affecting additional areas and markets.	Ecology Action	Kirsten Liske	\$310,962	х				х	х	х	х			х			х		х	х	х	х	х	х	х		х

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Rural Road Erosion Control Assistance Program	This project will address water quality impairments due to sediment runoff from private and public roads and their adject properties in Santa Cruz County Watersheds. Roads have been identified as one of the most significant sediment sources in the Aptos/Valencia Creek, Soquel Creek, San Lorenzo River, Pajaro River and their impaired tributaries. This project, titled the "Rural Road Erosion Control Assistance Program (RECAP)," will tackle roads as a sediment source by providing technical and cost-share assistance to private road associations and landowners for implementation of erosion control practices. Additionally, this project will promote the use of runoff controls at the source, using Low Impact Development concepts, from properties that contribute increased runoff volume and peak flows adjacent to roads. Project wil also be used as demonstration sites to further educate the public.		Angie Stuart	\$800,000					х	х	х		х	х	х			х	х	х		х		х	х				
Bluebonnet and Mount Hermon Recycled Water Main Extensions	The project consists of two elements: installation of 1,425 feet of new 6-inch diameter recycled water main in Bluebonnet Lane and replacement of 3,430 feet of degraded recycled water main in Mount Hermon Road. The Bluebonnet main extension will begin at the intersection of Bean Creek Road and Bluebonnet Lane, the terminus of the District's Bean Creek Road recycled main installation completed in 2009 with IRWM funding. The Mount Hermon element will replace existing, degraded 8-inch diameter schedule 40 poly vinyl chloride (PVC) using a trenchless method of pipe bursting with new poly ethylene (PE) or similar fusible pipe pulled through. Service fittings, service laterals, tees, valves, air relief valves, and other appurtenances will be added to provide for customer hookups. The two installations will converge on either side of the future Scotts Valley Town Center site.	Scotts Valley Water District	Charles McNeish	\$1,176,000	x	х	х						х								х	х	х		х	х			
The Farm Neighborhood Park and Community Center	The proposed Farm Neighborhood Park and Community Center is in the Soquel neighborhood of Santa Cruz County comprised of a County-owned five and one half acre site divided by a riparian corridor. A small neighborhood park west of the riparian corridor and a community park on the east side would be connected by an accessible pedestrian bridge and pathways with interpretive signage. The park master plan calls for the development of a LEED certified community center building, about 2.5 acres of stream and habitat restoration, restrooms, parking lots, pathways with interpretive signage, play structures, a skate board feature, a basketball half court, community gardens including heritage and native plants, public art and interpretive program elements. The project will integrate Stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) throughout and be a Low-Impact Development (LID).	SC County	Sheryl Bailey	\$13,250,000					х		х	х	х	х	х	х	x	х	х	х	x	х	х	х	х	х			
Davenport Water Recycling Project	The purpose of the Davenport Recycled Water Project is to plan, design and construct a recycled water facility in Davenport. The recycled water would be used primarily for landscaping and agricultural irrigation—including at the Coast Dairies Property just south of Davenport—and to offset the use of potable water. Currently the District's wastewater treatment plant is allowed to dispose of effluent by watering the landscape directly adjacent to the plant. Meanwhile, agricultural water users near Davenport are currently using water from the City of Santa Cruz. The Davenport Recycled Water Project, in conjunction with conservation and other measures, could serve many water users and save the County, the City of Santa Cruz, and residents a greatest of money in the long run.	SC County Sanitation	Rachel Lather	TBD	х	x	x						х	х						х	х	х	х					X	