



Thursday, May 26, 2016

**REGULAR MEETING**

**SONOMA COUNTY AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION AND OPEN SPACE  
DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

*Meeting begins at 5:00 p.m.*

**MEMBERS PLEASE CALL IF UNABLE TO ATTEND**

**AGENDA**

1. **Public Comment** - Comments on items not listed on the agenda  
(*Time is limited to 3 minutes per person/item*)
2. **Approval of Minutes** [Attachment "A"] **ACTION**  
April 28, 2016
3. **General Manager's Report** **INFORMATIONAL**
4. **Sub-Committee Report Outs** **INFORMATIONAL**
5. **Legislative** **INFORMATIONAL**  
Bill Keene, General Manager
6. **Estero Mitigation Project** [Attachment "B"] **INFORMATIONAL**  
Sheri Emerson, Stewardship Program Manager
7. **Projects in Negotiation** [Attachment "C"] **INFORMATIONAL**
8. **Announcements from Advisory Committee Members** **INFORMATIONAL**
9. **Adjournment** Next Meeting: June 23, 2016 (Field Trip)

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Any member of the audience desiring to address the Committee on a matter on the agenda will have an opportunity to speak. In order that all interested parties have an opportunity to speak, please be brief and limit your comments to the subject under discussion. Each person is usually granted 3 minutes to speak; time limitations are at the discretion of the Chair.

**Future Meeting Topics**  
(subject to change)

**6/23/16**

**Field Trip: TBD Ag Property Easement**

**7/28/16**

**Summer Break**

**8/25/16**

**Comprehensive Plan Update & Discussion**

**Matching Grant Program Recommendations**

**Farm & Nature Center Update**

DISABLED ACCOMMODATION: If you have a disability which requires the agenda materials to be in an alternative format or requires an interpreter or other person to assist you while attending this meeting, please contact Mariah Robson at (707) 565-7363, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting to ensure arrangements for accommodation.



Attachment "A"

***SONOMA COUNTY AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION AND OPEN SPACE  
DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE***

***April 28, 2016 MINUTES***

5:05 pm Meeting convened at the District office, 747 Mendocino Avenue,  
Suite 100, Santa Rosa, California

**Members Present**

Cary Fargo	Bill Smith	Laurie Gallian
Jan McFarland	John Nagle	Kristin Thigpen
Jeffrey Holtzman	Sue Conley	Steve Rabinowitsh

**Members Absent**

John Dell'Osso	Don McEnhill
Curt Nichols	Gary Wysocky
Doug Lipton	

**Staff Present**

Bill Keene, General Manager; Karen Gaffney, Conservation Planning Program Manager; Sheri Emerson, Stewardship Program Manager; Amy Ricard, Community Relations Specialist; Karina Chilcott, Administrative Aide; Bob Pittman, County Counsel; Mariah Robson, Advisory Committee Clerk

Chair Rabinowitsh called the meeting to order at 5:05 pm.

**Public Comment**

No public comment on items not on agenda.

**Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of March 24, 2016 were approved as submitted.

**General Manager's Report**

- Bill Keene, General Manager, introduced the newest District staff member, Karina Chilcott, as the new Administrative Aide, who transferred from Sonoma County Waste Management. Ms. Chilcott spoke to the group and the Advisory Committee welcomed her.
- Amy Ricard, Community Relations Specialist, worked on an insert for the Press Democrat and North Bay Business Journal with other stakeholders that profiles six farmers, ranchers

and grape growers practicing exemplary stewardship on their land. The insert was published the week of April 18, 2016.

- The Conservation Easement Workshop will be taken to the Board on May 10, 2016. The purpose of this workshop is to provide the Board with an overview of conservation easements as the District's primary land conservation tool, the value of the easements and how they are structured. The easement workshop was a recommendation of the 2014 Management Review.
- A District property mowing contract will go to the Board on May 10, 2016 as well.
- Karen Gaffney, Conservation Planning Program Manager, is bringing the Conservation Planning Update to the Board on May 24, 2016. This will include LiDAR, the Vegetation and Habitat Mapping program, the Climate Action Through Conservation Program, and Healthy Lands and Healthy Economies.
- The East Washington Park and Irwin Creek Matching Grant projects will also be going to the Board on May 24, 2016.
- District staff met with the City of Rohnert Park to discuss the proposed site for the Incubator Farm Project on the Young-Armos property in Rohnert Park. The District is setting up a site visit for the City of Rohnert Park staff and some of the neighbors of the Young-Armos property to see a successful farm that is adjacent to a residential area. The farm is Tierra Vegetables and the neighbors have been very supportive of the farm. There will be another site visit to Young-Armos with the City of Rohnert Park and the neighbors after the Tierra Vegetables visit. The District will let Advisory Committee members know when the tours are scheduled so that they can join the tours if they would like to.
- At the June 14, 2016 Board meeting the District will be proposing a contract with NBS Government Finance Group to evaluate costs associated with monitoring open space easements and the potential for collecting fees to offset the costs via the County tax roll. The District has not been able to recoup costs in the past and would like to do so going forward.

### **Sub-committee Report Outs**

Sue Conley, Chair of the Ag Subcommittee, reported there were no report outs for the subcommittee.

Chair Rabinowitsh announced that there was room for two more volunteers on the Matching Grant Subcommittee if anyone was interested. Laurie Gallian volunteered.

### **Youth Members Recruitment Process**

Karen Gaffney, Conservation Planning Program Manager, gave a brief update on the youth member recruitment process. The Board approved the Advisory Committee to include two youth members to join the committee. Applications are due on May 2, 2016. A custom mailing list was sent out, and it was announced on the District's Facebook page and website.

Advisory Committee members are needed to help select and mentor the two youth members. The interviews will take place two weeks after the May 2<sup>nd</sup> application deadline.

The time commitment for AC members would be two to four hours for the interviews and about an hour or two a month for mentoring.

Ms. Gaffney asked for volunteers and Steve Rabinowitsh, Kristin Thigpen and John Nagle volunteered. Ms. Gaffney will be in touch with the dates and times of the interviews.

### **Community Relations Update**

Amy Ricard, Community Relations Specialist, presented an update for Community Relations projects.

Branding: Ms. Ricard discussed the marketing firm Mission Minded who worked on the District's branding and identity. They helped fine tune the District's messaging and vision but we are still missing the "big idea" that can serve as the rallying cry for the community and staff. The District is moving into phase two now which will be to build on our logo and marketing materials. She is currently interviewing four local firms and will select the consultant in the next week and will be moving forward soon.

Website: The District is working with Firefly to refine and enhance the website. Our new and evolved identity will be infused into the website.

Photographers: Currently working with photos of properties with green hills, blue skies and people. Some examples include Pacheco Dairy shots of the family milking cows and walking in the pastures.

Culture Pop Films: Working on a series of videos showcasing work, family and agriculture, recreation, urban open space and natural lands. Examples include La Reve Farm, a berry farm in Sebastopol, and Tierra Vegetables, a small scale urban farm adjacent to a neighborhood in Santa Rosa.

Community Events: The District has participated in several community events recently. In February, we participated in the Lake Sonoma Steelhead Festival with an engaging booth with lots of young kids. In March, the District was at the Artisan Cheese Festival in support of dairy farms and cheese makers. Bianchi Dairy, Pacheco Dairy and Cowgirl Creamery were in attendance. People are very interested in the District and we will be going back next year. We are working on expanding our capacity to go to even more events each year.

Comprehensive Plan: Public outreach is a big part of the comprehensive plan and connecting with stakeholders.

The Conservation Planning program is working on recruiting an extra help position to assist Ms. Ricard in all of these projects. The District also recently recruited an Admin Aide, Karina Chilcott, who brings with her skills in graphic design and marketing and will support the Conservation Planning program as well as other programs at the District.

The District was recently awarded an \$8 million grant from NRCS. Next Friday, the District will host an event for the NRCS Chief Joseph Weller, State Conservationist Carlos Suarez and Secretary of Agriculture Karen Ross. Supervisor James Gore, Pepperwood Preserve, Laguna Foundation, Sonoma and Gold Ridge RCD's, Sonoma County Water Agency and others will be part of the event. It will begin with a reception with presentations at the Pepperwood Preserve followed by a field tour, and then move on to Laguna de Santa Rosa property to discuss sustainable groundwater management, viable ag, LiDAR, landowner conservation plans and other topics

The District will have another episode with OpenRoad and Doug McConnell that will feature Sonoma Valley: Montini and Sonoma Garden Park. Leslie Lew, Stewardship Associate Planner, will lead the tour. The filming will take place on May 14, 2016. Ms. Ricard will send an email to Advisory Committee members to let them know when the episode will air.

### **Upper Mark West Creek Salmonid Habitat Enhancement Project**

Sheri Emerson, Stewardship Program Manager, presented a PowerPoint presentation on the Upper Mark West Creek Salmonid Habitat Enhancement Project. The District and many others have worked on enhancing habitat within this watershed for many years. The District has contracted with Prunuske Chatham, Inc, on a design for a creek habitat enhancement project on the District-owned McCullough property, to improve conditions for protected Coho salmon and steelhead trout. The Sonoma Resource Conservation District submitted a funding application submitted to the NOAA Community Restoration Program to fund the implementation of the design over three years.

For more information, the PowerPoint presentation is available at the District upon request or you can contact Sheri Emerson with any questions.

### **Projects in Negotiations**

No report out.

### **Announcements From Advisory Committee Members**

#### **Jeffrey Holtzman**

Mr. Holtzman had a piece published in today's Press Democrat, titled *Close to Home: The Promise of Protection for the Atascadero Marsh.*

#### **Steve Rabinowitsh**

Save the Bay's Measure AA is on the ballot. This measure could restore the San Francisco Bay and protect shoreline communities.

#### **Laurie Gallian**

The Mayors' and Councilmembers' will have Measure AA on their agenda on May 2, 2016 in support of the measure.

#### **Bill Keene**

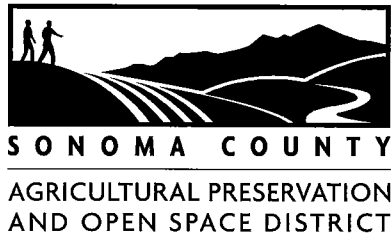
Mr. Keene attended Jared Huffman's 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Environmental Breakfast last Friday, April 22, 2016, and rode the SMART train to view the Mira Monte Restoration Project. There are still some issues on getting to the train that are being worked on, but the train is beautiful and is a very smooth ride.

#### **Adjournment:** 6:23 pm

Next scheduled meeting date: May 26, 2016

Respectfully submitted,

Mariah Robson,  
Advisory Committee Secretary



Attachment "B"

**MEMORANDUM**

**Date:** May 20, 2016  
**To:** District Advisory Committee  
**From:** Sheri J. Emerson, Stewardship Program Manager  
**Subject:** Estero Ranch Conservation Easement Mitigation Proposal

Your Committee has asked that proposals for mitigation-related habitat restoration on District-protected properties come before the Advisory Committee for discussion prior to staff approval or Board of Directors action.

The District was contacted by The Wildlands Conservancy, owner of the Estero Ranch property, about a proposal to use mitigation funding (resulting from a Caltrans highway bridge replacement project) to support needed habitat restoration on the Estero Ranch property. The District holds a conservation easement over the property. District staff are in the process of reviewing the proposal against the easement language, to determine if it is consistent with the language.

At your May 26, 2016 meeting, District and Wildlands Conservancy staff will provide additional information about the "Riparian and Wetland Enhancement Proposal," attached to this memo.



## **Estero Americano Coastal Preserve: Riparian and Wetland Restoration and Enhancement**

**Preserve Overview:** The Preserve was acquired on December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015 by the Sonoma Land Trust using funds from the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District (SCAPOSD) and the State Coastal Conservancy. Immediately upon acquisition the property was transferred to The Wildlands Conservancy (TWC), a private non-profit public benefit organization. TWC manages the property to protect the Conservation Values outlined in the Conservation Easement (CE), which is held by SCAPOSD.

The Preserve is located on the Pacific Coast at the mouth of the Estero Americano, a unique, fjord-like coastal estuary that is one of the most biologically important areas on the North Coast with its diverse assemblage of wetland communities and estuarine habitats. The estuary is in the heart of the Pacific Flyway and provides important habitat for migratory waterfowl and shorebirds and resident long-legged wading birds, as well as many special-status species including the Northwestern pond turtle, California red-legged frog, and the tidewater goby. The eelgrass beds at the mouth of the estuary are particularly important habitat for many bird and fish species. Wetland habitats on and adjacent to the Property include freshwater, brackish water and salt marsh wetlands, and intertidal mudflats. Upland habitats include coastal prairie (designated by the California Coastal Commission as an “Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area”), coastal scrub, annual grasslands, freshwater ponds and seeps, riparian ravines and several groves of planted cypress and Eucalyptus trees for windbreaks. Water from the Property runs into the Pacific Ocean via Shorttail Gulch, and to the Estero Americano via several unnamed drainages. The Property is flanked by one mile of the Estero Americano estuary on the south, and a three quarter mile stretch of the Pacific Coastline on the west. Over 70 species of birds have been observed in the Estero Americano area. Historic fish surveys in the area have identified 31 marine and freshwater species, the greatest species abundance and diversity were located at the mouth of the Estero. Common mammals on the Property include white tail deer, coyote, and otter. American Badger dens have been identified on the Property as well.

**Preserve Management:** The property will be managed to protect its natural and cultural resources, while also providing opportunities for compatible passive public recreation. The property is comprised primarily of coastal prairie grassland. TWC will use light to moderate grazing as a management tool to maintain and enhance the grasslands, while implementing measures to protect wetland and riparian habitats.

**Potential Mitigation Projects:** Several riparian and wetland habitats on the Preserve are in a degraded condition and are in need of restoration and enhancement (see attached map). These areas consist of:



- Riparian/Erosion Gully: Areas in need of streambank bioengineering (grading to re-establish channel banks and slope, installation of grade control structures, erosion control fabric, wattles, etc.) and re-establishment of riparian willow and associated species.
- Freshwater Wetland: Areas in need of re-establishment of freshwater wetland species around the pond.
- Coastal Prairie/Erosion Gully: Areas in need of streambank bioengineering and re-establishment of coastal prairie wetland species.
- Grade Control Structures: Areas that currently support riparian vegetation but need grade control structures to stabilize the stream channel.
- Wetland/Springs: Areas that support wetland vegetation that is in need of restoration. These areas could be restored and protected in tandem with using them as a water source for livestock water troughs. Water troughs would be located away from springs and other sensitive resources.

In addition to these areas, there is a small domestic garbage dump within the southeastern drainage that needs to be removed as part of the restoration efforts.

**Process to Approve:** SCAPOSD holds a Conservation Easement on the Preserve which limits activities on the Preserve including habitat mitigation. If the Preserve is found to be a suitable candidate as a habitat mitigation site, approval from SCAPOSD would be the first step needed prior to moving forward with development of a habitat mitigation and monitoring plan.

In addition to the CE held by the SCAPOSD, the State Coastal Conservancy holds an Offer To Dedicate with restrictive covenants that expressly forbid use of the property for mitigation without a letter of approval from their Executive Director (ED). However, initial conversations with the EDs of both the Conservancy and SCAPOSD with regard to enhancements, not preservation, indicate that subject to terms and conditions, they would be willing to issue such letters and approvals.

## Photos



Coastal Prairie/Erosion Gully



Riparian/Erosion Gully



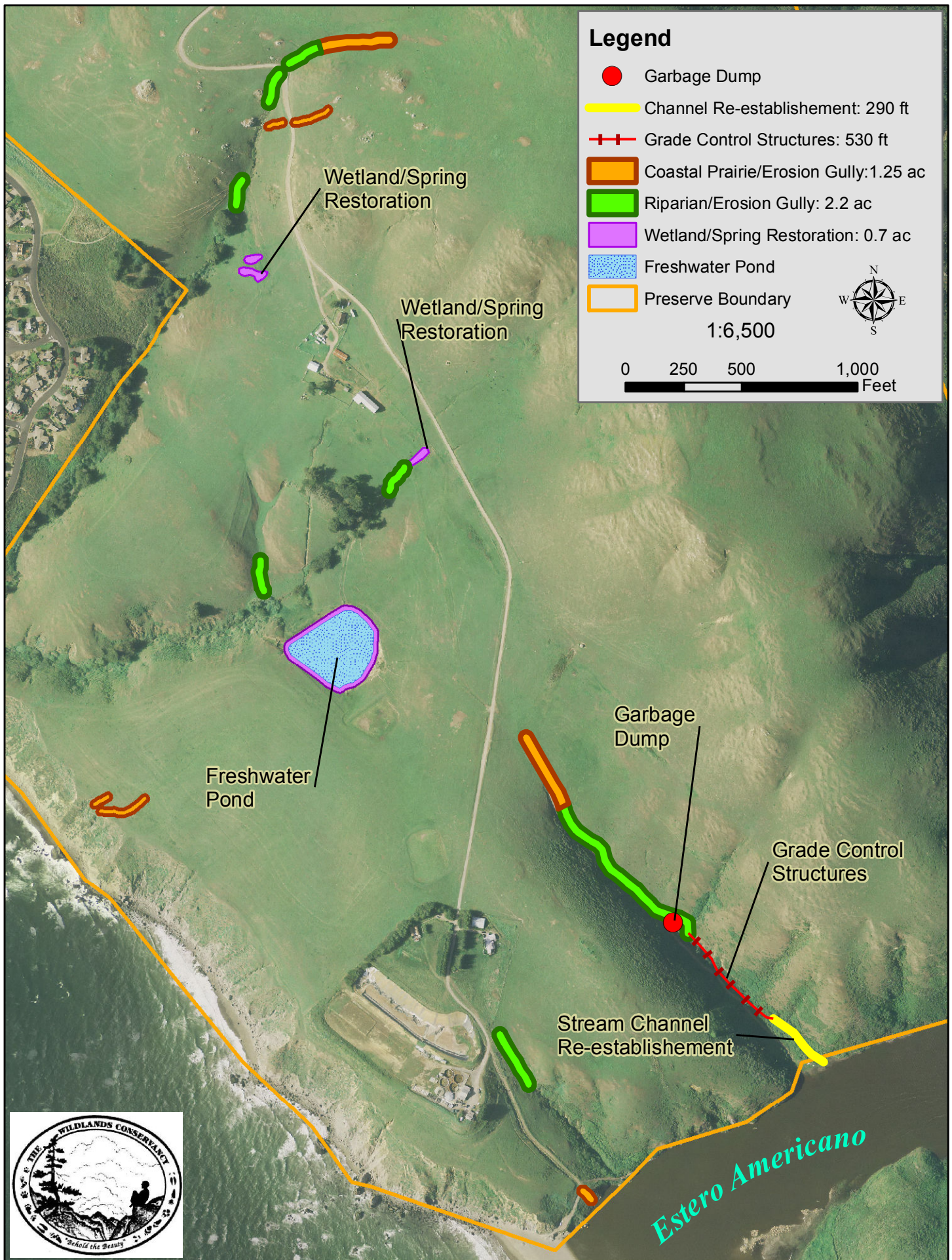


Riparian/Erosion Gully



Riparian/Erosion Gully





Estero Americano Coastal Preserve



PROJECT	Acreage (approximate)	Supervisory District	Acquisition Plan Category	Project Design	Appraisal Process	Approvals/Baseline	Escrow	Comments
Arrowhead-Maas Ranch	245	2	Farms & Ranches	x				CE under negotiation
Bettinelli Dairy	300	2	Farms & Ranches					On hold at request of owner
Buttke Dairy	253	2	Farms & Ranches					On hold at request of owner
Cresta III	46	1	Recreation & Education	x	x			On hold at request of owner
Donnell	909	1	Greenbelts & Scenic Hillside	x				CE under negotiation
Fitch Mountain (Acq P2)	26	4	Recreation & Education	x	x	x		Under contract
Foppiano Vineyards	160	4	Greenbelts & Scenic Hillside	x	x			Fiscal Oversight Commission reviewed 3/5/15
Glenn Ranch	230	2	Farms & Ranches	x	x			On hold at request of owner
Gloeckner-Turner Ranch	3,364	5	Water, Wildlife & Natural Areas	x				On hold at request of owner
Hansen Ranch	330	2	Farms & Ranches	x	x			Appraisal under review
Howlett Forest	1,395	5	Water, Wildlife & Natural Areas	x	x			Appraisal underway
LaFranchi	1,189	4	Farms & Ranches	x				On hold at request of owner
Lafranconi	211	5	Greenbelts & Scenic Hillside	x				CE under negotiation
Mattos Dairy	866	2	Farms & Ranches	x				Project design
McClelland Dairy	337	2	Farms & Ranches	x	x			On hold at request of owner
McCullough - Phase 2	259	1	Recreation & Education	x	x			On hold at request of owner
Ranchero Mark West	120	1	Recreation & Education	x	x	x	x	Closed escrow April 15, 2016
Rips Redwoods	1,850	5	Water, Wildlife & Natural Areas	x				CE under negotiation
Sonoma Developmental Ctr V (Transforma	945	1	Greenbelts & Scenic Hillside					Resource assessment underway
Spring Hill Ranch	313	1	Farms & Ranches	x				On hold at request of owner
Stewarts Point Ranch	871	5	Water, Wildlife & Natural Areas	x	x	x		Fiscal Oversight Commission reviewed 4/7/16
Terrilinda Dairy	175	2	Greenbelts & Scenic Hillside	x				Project design
Weeks Ranch - Rasmason	1,372	1	Water, Wildlife & Natural Areas					Initiating project

Total Acres: 15,767

Matching Grant Projects	Acreage (approximate)	Supervisory District	Location	Begin Grant Process	Appraisal Process	Approvals/Baseline	Escrow	Comments
Bayer Farm Site Development	6**	5	Southwest Santa Rosa	x	x	x	x	Reimbursement ongoing
Colgan Creek Park and Preserve (Ph 1)	2	5	Southwest Santa Rosa	x	x	x	x	Closed escrow 4/8/16.
Colgan Creek Park and Restoration (Ph 2)	5	5	Southwest Santa Rosa	x	x	x	x	Closed escrow 4/8/16.
Colgan Creek Restoration (Ph 3)	7	5	Southwest Santa Rosa	x	n/a	x	x	Board approved 4/21/15
Crane Creek Regional Trail	6	1	East of Rohnert Park	x	n/a			Advisory Committee accepted project 6/28/07
Creekside Park, Phase 1A	4**	5	Monte Rio	x	n/a	x	x	Reimbursement ongoing
Denman Reach Phase 3	2	2	North Petaluma	x				Drafting documents
East Washington Park	25	2	Northeast Petaluma	x	n/a	x		scheduled for Board approval May 24th
Falletti Ranch	4	2	Cotati	x	x	x	x	Tracking match
Forever Forestville	4	5	Downtown Forestville	x	x	x	x	Tracking match
Guerneville River Park, Phase 2	5	5	Central Guerneville	x	x	x		FOC approved 1/9/14
Irwin Creek Riparian Restoration	47**	5	West of Santa Rosa	x	n/a		n/a	scheduled for Board May 24
Moorland Park	4	5	Southwest Santa Rosa	x				Initiating project
MRRP-Meadowlark Field	58	5	Sebastopol	x	x	x	x	Reimbursement ongoing
Nathanson Creek Preserve Restoration	1**	1	Sonoma	x	n/a			Drafting documents
Paula Lane OSP	11	2	West Petaluma	x	x	x	x	Tracking match
Patterson Point	2	5	Villa Grande	x	x	x	x	Reimbursement ongoing
Roseland Village Public Space	1	5	Southwest Santa Rosa	x				Initiating project
Sebastopol Skatagarden Expansion	1	5	Sebastopol	x	n/a			FOC approved 11/12/15, BOD approved 12/15/15
SMART Pathway – Hearn to Bellevue	6	5	Southwest Santa Rosa	x	n/a			Negotiations
SMART Pathway - Payran to S. Point	14	2	Petaluma	x				Initiating project
Sonoma Garden Park, Phase 2	5**	1	East of Sonoma	x	n/a	x	n/a	Reimbursement ongoing
<b>Total Acres:</b>	<b>157</b>							

\*\* Restoration/Development Project on previous acquisition.