OCEAN PROTECTION COUNCIL

Item 4

Staff Recommendation
December 7, 2021

Action Item: Consideration and Approval of Disbursement of Proposition 1 Funds for Projects that Benefit Communities Entitled to Environmental Justice and Improve Coastal Water Quality

Maria Rodriguez, Wetlands Program Manager

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Staff recommends that OPC approve the disbursement of $7,500,000 to various grantees for coastal projects that directly benefit communities entitled to environmental justice and support multi-benefit ecosystem and watershed protection or restoration that improves water quality, resilience to climate change, and supports community engagement, as follows:

4a. $1,000,000 to State Coastal Conservancy for “Redwood National and State Parks Visitor Center and Lower Prairie Creek Restoration”

4b. $1,276,951 to the Humboldt State University (HSU) Sponsored Programs Foundation, working in close partnership with the Wiyot Tribe, for “Wiyot Tribe Acquisition of Coastal Property for Cultural and Water Quality Protection”

4c. $804,000 to Marin Audubon Society for “Tiscornia Marsh Restoration and Sea-Level Rise Adaptation Project”

4d. $1,192,253 to the City of Watsonville for “Middle Struve Slough Water Quality and Habitat Improvement Project”.

4e. $2,269,526 to TreePeople for “Wilmington Middle School and Community Green Infrastructure Project”

4f. $957,000 to City of National City for “Paradise Creek Wetland Expansion and Park Creation”

LOCATION: Statewide; see Exhibits for more detailed project specific locations.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES: These projects would implement strategic targets in Goals 1, 2 and 3, within Objective 1.1: Build Resiliency to Sea-Level Rise, Coastal Storms, Erosion, Flooding; Objective 2.2: Enhance Engagement with Underserved Communities; Objective 2.3: Improve Coastal Access; Objective 3.1: Protect and Restore

Coastal and Marine Ecosystems; and Objective 3.4: Improve Coastal and Ocean Water Quality.

EXHIBITS:

Item 4a: Redwood National and State Parks Visitor Center and Lower Prairie Creek Restoration

- 4a1 Project Location Map and Project Area Maps
- 4a2 Notice of Determination
- 4a3 Letters of Support

Item 4b: Wiyot Tribe Acquisition of Coastal Property for Cultural and Water Quality Protection

- 4b1 Project Location Map and Project Area Maps
- 4b2 Willing Seller Letter
- 4b3 Letters of Support

Item 4c: Tiscornia Marsh Restoration and Sea-Level Rise Adaptation Project

- 4c1 Project Location Map and Project Area Maps
- 4c2 Letters of Support

Item 4d: Middle Struve Slough Water Quality and Habitat Improvement Project

- 4d1 Project Location Map and Project Area Maps
- 4d2 Draft Design Plan
- 4d3 Letters of Support

Item 4e: Wilmington Middle School and Community Green Infrastructure Project

- 4e1 Project Location Map and Project Area Map
- 4e2 Letters of Support

Item 4f: Paradise Creek Wetland Expansion and Park Creation

- 4f1 Project Location Map and Project Area Maps
- 4f2 Letters of Support

FINDINGS AND RESOLUTION:

Staff recommends that the Ocean Protection Council (OPC) adopt the following findings:

"Based on the accompanying staff report and attached exhibit(s), OPC hereby finds that:

1) The proposed projects are consistent with the purposes of Division 26.5 of the Public Resources Code, the California Ocean Protection Act;
2) The proposed projects are consistent with the OPC's Proposition 1 Grant Guidelines, as revised and adopted February 2021; and

3) The proposed projects address the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as follows:

Redwood National and State Parks Visitor Center and Lower Prairie Creek Restoration: OPC has reviewed CEQA documents as follows: A Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for this project was prepared by the State Coastal Conservancy, the lead agency for CEQA compliance, and it was certified in September 2020. OPC staff recommends that the mitigation and avoidance measures identified in the MND (Exhibit 4a2) be adopted as a condition of OPC's approval.

Wiyot Tribe Acquisition of Coastal Property for Cultural and Water Quality Protection: OPC has determined that this initial phase of the project does not require the completion of CEQA documentation, therefore CEQA is not triggered. (14 CCR 15004.) Moreover, to the extent CEQA did apply, this funding award would be categorically exempt. (See, e.g., 14 CCR 15304, 15325.)

Tiscornia Marsh Restoration and Sea-Level Rise Adaptation Project: A Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) was prepared by the City of San Rafael, the lead agency for CEQA compliance, and is anticipated to be certified by December of 2021. OPC funds for the project will not be released until after the City completes a notice of determination and certification, including any mitigation and avoidance measures identified in the certified EIR.

Middle Struve Slough Water Quality and Habitat Improvement Project: OPC has determined that this project is a water quality and small habitat restoration project which is categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to Public Resources Code section, section 15333. A Notice of Exemption (Categorical Exemption 15333) was filed by the City of Watsonville with the State CEQA Clearinghouse on November 1, 2021 (Case number 2021110033). OPC has reviewed and considered this exemption and agrees that the exemption satisfies CEQA requirements.

Wilmington Middle School and Community Green Infrastructure Project: This project has a combination of planning and implementation components, and therefore is expected to have their permitting and CEQA documentation complete before the implementation phase of the project, per OPC's Proposition 1 Grant Guidelines. The Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), the lead agency for CEQA compliance, anticipates filing a Notice of Exemption (Categorical Exemption 15333) which will be completed early to mid-2022. OPC funds for the project will not be released until after LAUSD completes its CEQA compliance. OPC staff has

reviewed and considered the draft Notice of Exemption and preliminarily supports reliance on the CEQA exemption.

Paradise Creek Wetland Expansion and Park Creation: This project has a combination of planning and implementation components, and therefore is expected to have their permitting and CEQA documentation complete before the implementation phase of the project, per OPC's Proposition 1 Grant Guidelines. The City of National City, the lead agency for CEQA compliance, will prepare a MND which will be completed in October 2022. OPC funds for the project will not be released until after the City completes a notice of determination and certification, including any mitigation and avoidance measures identified in the certified MND.

Staff further recommends that OPC adopt the following resolution pursuant to Sections 35500 *et seq.* of the Public Resources Code:

"OPC hereby approves the disbursement of $7,500,000 up to the following amounts to the following grantees:

- $1,276,951 to the Humboldt State University (HSU) Sponsored Programs Foundation, working in close partnership with the Wiyot Tribe, for "Wiyot Tribe Acquisition of Coastal Property for Cultural and Water Quality Protection"
- $804,000 to Marin Audubon Society for "Tiscornia Marsh Restoration and Sea-Level Rise Adaptation Project"
- $1,192,253 to the City of Watsonville for "Middle Struve Slough Water Quality and Habitat Improvement Project"
- $2,269,526 to TreePeople for "Wilmington Middle School and Community Green Infrastructure Project"
- $957,000 to City of National City for "Paradise Creek Wetland Expansion and Park Creation"
- $1,000,000 to State Coastal Conservancy for "Redwood National and State Parks Visitor Center and Lower Prairie Creek Restoration"

This authorization is subject to the condition that prior to disbursement of funds, all of the above-referenced grantees shall submit for the review and approval of the Executive Director of the OPC detailed work plans, schedules, staff requirements, budgets, completed evidence of CEQA compliance, as appropriate, and the names of any contractors intended to be used to complete the projects, as well as discrete deliverables that can be produced in intervals to ensure the projects are on target for successful completion. All projects will be developed under a shared understanding of process, management and delivery."

BACKGROUND:

In March, OPC staff released a solicitation for projects directly benefitting Communities Entitled to Environmental Justice (Communities) using the remaining $7.5 million of OPC's Proposition (Prop) 1 funds. Communities included: the state-defined disadvantaged and severely disadvantaged communities, California Native Tribes and Tribal Governments, and communities that score above 80% on CalEnviroScreen results. The solicitation called for projects located in or near Communities that improve water quality through restoration, habitat enhancement and resilience to climate change. In April, OPC received over 40 applications totaling approximately 7.5 times the amount of funding available. Seventeen applicants were invited back to submit full proposals, totaling approximately 2.3 times the amount of funding available. OPC staff has evaluated and scored proposals through this competitive process and is recommending six projects for consideration of award funding at this December Council meeting.

PROJECT SUMMARIES:

4a: Redwood National and State Parks Visitor Center and Lower Prairie Creek Restoration

Project Description
This project is part of implementation of the larger 125-acre Redwood National and State Park Visitor Center and Restoration Project (RNSPVCR project), a multi-phase, multi-benefit Enhancement and Restoration project to restore ecosystem function and key salmon habitat on lower Prairie Creek and develop the site for economic opportunity and Tribal benefits. The site, owned by the non-profit organization Save the Redwoods League (League), was formerly the location of a sawmill and a dairy operation. Along with remnants of the mill development (of which soils have been investigated for toxics and determined to be clean by the North Coast Regional Quality Control Board), the site currently contains the most downstream mile of Prairie Creek and its floodplain, wetlands and forest habitats. The site is in a severely disadvantaged community that includes the nearby town of Orick in Humboldt County, within Yurok Tribe ancestral territory. This project addresses degraded water quality, fish habitat loss, and limited economic opportunities in the community. A primary goal of the RNSPVCR is to restore geomorphic and biological functions in the lower Prairie Creek subwatershed for the benefit of ESA-listed fish, other wildlife, and local communities, including tribes.

The Redwood Creek watershed, which includes the Redwood Creek and Prairie Creek drainages, is listed as impaired for temperature and sediment under the Clean Water Act Section 303(d), and coho salmon, Chinook salmon and steelhead are listed as threatened under the Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA), throughout the watershed. Prairie Creek is the largest tributary to Redwood Creek and while much of Prairie Creek is a water quality and salmon stronghold, certain sections of the creek, including the project site, have legacy land use issues that require restoration and enhancement to improve water quality and habitat. The Redwood/Prairie Creek populations of salmon and steelhead are critical

for recovery of the species as a whole, and once lower Prairie Creek is restored, it will be an anchor for cold water salmon recovery on the North Coast. Prairie Creek flows into Redwood Creek three river miles from the Pacific Ocean where it discharges into a designated Water Quality Protection Area and a Critical Coastal Area (CCA)[1]. Unfavorable conditions in these last three miles of Redwood Creek limit the productivity of salmonids in this high-potential watershed, making restoration of the most downstream section of Prairie Creek even more critically important.

The project includes removing 4 acres of asphalt from the 20-acre former mill site, excavating restoring fish habitat by creating slow water refugia (1.1-acre backwater) and extending stream meander (800 feet), restoring floodplain along 1,000 feet of incised channel, and planting with native vegetation. It will use fill from excavation to bring to grade the excavated asphalt in preparation of a Trails Gateway and will provide soils to establish the footprint of the future Yurok village site, where Yurok Tribal members will regain access to ancestral lands. The project will reduce pollutant run-off by removing the asphalt from the floodplain and address water quality in a CCA. The new trail system will improve access for the local community and visitors, including the Orick and Yurok Tribal communities, and will include interpretation (exhibits, tours, signage, etc.) for coastal ecology and Tribal culture. The Yurok Tribe has been a key planning member and their implementation crew will be a primary restoration contractor, as will members of the Orick community.

Benefits to Communities

During construction of the various phases of the project, direct economic benefits will be yielded, as local contractors and materials suppliers have job and workforce development opportunities, and long after the ultimate Visitor Center opening as upwards of 800,000 visitors annually are expected to visit and seek amenities in the area. The League will both lead and facilitate future community-driven programming onsite, launching with a Community event immediately upon opening. Both dedicated League budget for the opening program and staff time have been allocated to the project, including efforts by the Outreach Program Manager to brief community partners on the Project status during implementation and engage the CBOs on joint program planning. Further, the project will engage – and compensate – the Yurok Tribal Youth and the California Conservation Corps to assist with various onsite activities during restoration, such as invasive plant removal and revegetation activities. Additionally, Humboldt State University students will be invited to develop Senior Capstone projects around the restoration work, as part of their curriculum.

Upon completion of Prairie Creek restoration and the Trails Gateway phase of public access, the property will transfer to the National Park Service (NPS) who will ultimately construct the Visitor Center facilities (pending securement of federal funding) and provide

[1] Critical Coastal Areas (CCA) identify coastal watersheds that reflect the dual goals of improving degraded coastal water quality and providing extra protection from polluted runoff to coastal waters with recognized high resource value. (*Coastal Water Quality Program,* California Coastal Commission, December 2019).

and maintain community access and site interpretation in perpetuity, consistent with their mission. The Project will feature trails and gathering spaces to enable free community events, programs and recreation. The additional local visitation will yield substantial direct and indirect economic benefits to the nearby Orick community, which will become the host and effective owner of the RNSP southern gateway experience. The Project will also facilitate long-term empowerment of and leadership by the Yurok Tribe. In addition to the lasting and far-reaching impact of the restored fish and wildlife habitat, the League plans to convey a cultural easement to the Tribe for the portion of the property dedicated to the Yurok Village Site that will transfer with the property to the NPS. Thus, the Tribe will have the authority and autonomy to program the approximately 2.6-acre site as they see fit. This approach will be new to the NPS and is an exciting pilot and potential model for other park acquisitions. The site has already been used and continues to be used to provide opportunities for Yurok youth groups to participate in and learn about site stewardship activities.

Refer to Exhibit 4a1 for a map of the project location.

Project Timeline
Construction to build Prairie Creek meander and restoration of the floodplain will occur seasonally each year until project completion in December 2024. Fill and grading for the Yurok village site will be completed mid-August 2024 through October 2024. Asphalt removal and grade for the future trail gateway will occur in 2023 and 2024, between August and October. Revegetation for native wetland/riparian and upland plants will begin consecutively every winter. Community outreach and engagement is ongoing throughout the entire phase of the project. Restoration monitoring will take place in the late-winter each year. Fish monitoring would continue for three years post-project during the term of the grant, and would occur annually, as funding allows, year-round, for up to ten years after the first construction season.

Project Financing
Staff recommends that OPC authorize encumbrance of up to $1,000,000 to the State Coastal Conservancy for the Redwood National and State Parks Visitor Center and Lower Prairie Creek Restoration. The proposed project may not require expenditure of the full $1,000,000.

Ocean Protection Council Prop 1	**$1,000,000**
OPC Total	**$1,000,000**
CA State Coastal Conservancy	$300,000
USFWS National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Program	$600,000
Save the Redwoods League	$200,000
Total Non-OPC Match	**$1,100,000**
TOTAL	**$2,100,000**

4b: Wiyot Tribe Acquisition of Coastal Property for Cultural and Water Quality Protection

Project Description

This project consists of acquiring a 48-acre coastal property in an area called *Mouralherwaqh* on Wigi (Humboldt Bay) for ecocultural restoration, water quality protection and conservation purposes. *Mouralherwaqh,* or lower Humboldt Hill, is a culturally important site within the Wiyot ancestral territory that is just nine miles from the Wiyot Tribe's Table Bluff Reservation. Acquisition would allow the Tribe to increase its land holdings by 10%, fulfilling a key goal of the Tribe to regain ownership of ancestral lands. This project includes site assessment, land acquisition, community engagement, and the development of a monitoring and ecocultural restoration and management plan that draws from traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) and Western science to support water quality, coastal habitat, and cultural sustainability on the site and in the connected region. A Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment and Water Quality and Sediment Assessment will be completed as part of the initial site assessment.

The project team is composed of representatives from the Wiyot Tribe, Humboldt State University (HSU), and two environmental non-governmental organizations: Friends of the Dunes and Humboldt Baykeeper. This project was developed at the request of the Wiyot Tribe and the other project partners are involved to help support the Tribe's goals for land return and ecocultural restoration. HSU is the lead applicant for the project because the University's Sponsored Programs Foundation has extensive experience administering and managing grants of this size. The majority of the funds in the grant (>75%) will go to the Tribe. All project partners have a history of working together on key coastal issues and are all members of the HSU Sea-Level Rise Initiative (SLRI): an academic-tribal-government-community partnership that envisions "a diverse network of collaborators working together across disciplines, sectors, and ways of knowing to develop sea-level rise research and planning that informs equitable and community-centered local climate action." Project team members are part of several state-wide ocean groups including the OPC Science Advisory Team, the CSU Council on Ocean Affairs, Science & Technology, and the California Coastkeeper Alliance, ensuring that insights from project implementation can inform the state's ocean management.

The site proposed for acquisition and future restoration has been identified by the California Coastal Commission as a CCA[1] and is upstream of a Clean Water Act Section 303(d) listed impaired waterway for dioxins and PCBs. It is also located within the Elk River Watershed which is a 303(d) listed as impaired by sediment. The site contains degraded coastal wetlands and upland areas with spruce forests, open meadows, many invasive species, and has been logged as recently as 2014. The Phase I Environmental Site Assessment will be thoroughly vetted to examine the site's historic uses and potential for contamination. Wetland and habitat assessments, exploratory sampling, and plant inventories will identify current conditions, including species of concern and tribal cultural resources. Findings will be used to inform plans for improving water quality, including invasive species management, clean-up and revegetation of cleared areas, water quality

monitoring and education, and habitat restoration. The Tribe is driven to acquire ownership over this unique parcel as a means of improving coastal habitat function and water quality within its ancestral territory, drawing from both traditional ecological knowledge and Western science approaches.

The project includes the development of an Ecocultural Restoration and Management Plan (ERMP) for restoring the site for water quality, coastal habitat, SLR adaptation, and cultural purposes. The ERMP will include clear goals to measurably improve water quality at the site and surrounding region. Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be implemented to address sediment pollution from the timber harvest activities and actively restore hydrologic connectivity between the two wetlands that were fragmented by road developments, allowing for an expansion of the wetlands. Foundational goals and components of the ERMP will aim to address the following water quality impairments at the site:

- Removal of large infestations of non-native invasive plant species on the property, like Scotch broom (Cytisus scoparius), and planting of native species, including Wiyot culturally important species found on the parcel.
- Stormwater runoff from historically cleared areas onsite and adjacent developed residential areas likely contributes to non-point pollution and sediment accumulation in the stream and wetlands on the site as well as the adjacent watershed. Ecocultural restoration planning and implementation will include assessing the hydrologic function of the site and developing BMPs such as bioswales to retain and infiltrate stormwater before it reaches the streams and wetland.
- Along with potential contaminants from adjacent runoff from residential uses, the steep hardpack of the Humboldt Hill subdivision accelerates sediment transport and runoff into the Humboldt Bay adjacent to the Elk River estuary, which is a tributary presently listed on the 303(d) list as impaired by sediment. Sediment impacts amphibian breeding areas, and will eventually alter the wetland hydrology, water temperature, and vegetation. As a BMP during restoration, native species will be installed in concert with invasive species removal to reduce potential erosion associated with soil disturbance.
- The lower portion of the site is vulnerable to inundation from one meter of sea-level rise, also making the property susceptible to potential saltwater intrusion into Eureka plain groundwater. Water quality monitoring at the site is ideal due to these issues and will allow for the tracking of how this inundation is affecting surface water quality. The Wiyot Natural Resources Department maintains a Clean Water Act Section 106 water quality program, which could be expanded to establish a water quality monitoring program at this site.

The Wiyot Tribe will preserve this undeveloped parcel from potential residential development and further industrial timber operations so it can function as an important buffer benefiting water quality in Humboldt Bay as sea level rises. Development pressure on this parcel will only become greater with sea-level rise, further highlighting the critical role it this project will play as a natural buffer and filter for water quality while ensuring future access to the coast and providing a refuge for biota.

Benefits to Communities
The project team will incorporate Wiyot Tribe community engagement into all phases of the project. The idea for the project came from the Wiyot Tribe and emerged from ongoing prior climate change adaptation planning discussions with tribal members. A Community Advisory Committee composed of Wiyot Tribal members and staff will be convened to support effective engagement surrounding project development and to provide input for future visioning at the site. The Tribal Council will also be engaged, and outreach activities will be announced in the Wiyot monthly newsletter. The project will also incorporate a substantial education component consisting of at least one Wiyot intern and three graduate students and four undergraduates from HSU who will assist with clean-up, ecocultural planning, and monitoring of the site. A goal will be to recruit Native American students for these roles. The project team will also host regular field trips to the site for HSU college students enrolled in classes for Indigenous Natural Resource Management, Environmental Justice, and Coastal and Marine Planning. There will also be opportunities to interact with the adjacent elementary and middle school, to bring awareness of concepts of indigenous land return, land management, justice, water quality and ecocultural restoration.

By the end of the project period the Wiyot Tribe will regain ownership over a part of Mouralherwaqh, culturally important land in their ancestral territory. Land return can be a deeply empowering, spiritual, and cultural process for Indigenous Nations and is a means to address historic injustice and to heal and restore these landscapes and ecosystems. Benefits from the project are likely to accrue for generations as the site will be a location for Tribal members to visit and gather culturally important species long into the future.

Refer to Exhibit 4b1 for a map of the project location.

Project Timeline
Site assessments will begin prior to acquiring the site during the first three quarters of 2022. The acquisition process will follow site assessments and is anticipated to begin late 2022 and be completed by early 2023, if not sooner. Site monitoring and planning for the ERMP will begin Spring 2023 and continue until completion of the project in December 2024. Community outreach and engagement is ongoing throughout the entire phase of the project.

Project Financing
Staff recommends that OPC authorize encumbrance of up to $1,276,951 to HSU Sponsored Programs Foundation, working in close partnership with the Wiyot Tribe, for the Wiyot Tribe Acquisition of Coastal Property for Cultural and Water Quality Protection. The proposed project may not require expenditure of the full $1,276,951.

Ocean Protection Council Prop 1	**$1,276,951**
OPC Total	**$1,276,951**
OPC Prop 68 (Wiyot Climate Change Adaptation Plan, Phase I project)	10,000
Friends of the Dunes	$5,000
PG&E	$5,000
Total Non-OPC Match	$10,000
TOTAL	$1,296,951

4c: Tiscornia Marsh Restoration and Sea-Level Rise Adaptation Project

Project Description
The project site is located in the City of San Rafael (City) at the mouth of the San Rafael Canal in Marin County, on a portion of the Pickleweed Park and the adjacent Tiscornia Marsh in the Canal Community. The majority of the project area is owned by the Marin Audubon Society and approximately 6 acres are owned by the City. This project will restore Tiscornia Marsh's tidal marsh/mudflats located north and outboard of the Canal Street and the diked marsh located north of the Pickleweed Park Playfields. The Tiscornia Marsh has experienced considerable erosion along its bayward edge, which is attributed to direct wave action from the San Rafael Bay (a segment of Central San Francisco Bay). Over the last 30 years, approximately three acres of the tidal marsh has been lost to this erosion, which has dramatically impacted habitat for species such as the Ridgway's rail and salt marsh harvest mouse. Under current conditions, it is expected that this erosion will continue and will likely increase as sea-level rises. The second critical issue for this general area is flooding. The adjacent Canal neighborhood is low-lying and is currently at risk to coastal flooding (as well as sea-level rise). The project is needed to halt the rapid loss of tidal marsh from ongoing erosion and to help reduce the coastal flood risk for San Rafael's Canal Community by restoring tidal marsh and improving a portion of the levee. The eroding marsh and lack of functional transition zone greatly increase the vulnerability of the endangered species. In its current state, the existing levee is narrow, has over-steep embankments, and is already vulnerable to the FEMA 100-year annual chance flood event due to its low elevation in several areas, exacerbating the threat of coastal flooding from high tides, storm surge, and wave runup. This means the Canal Community is at a particularly high risk of flooding from even near-term sea-level rise, especially as the buffer of marsh continues to erode.

This project will protect and enhance the coastal ecosystem and adjacent communities, particularly in light of climate change. Restoring and improving resilience of tidal marsh habitats and improving the existing levee with a functional ecotone will protect both the ecosystem and the adjacent community. The project will improve resilience of this section of the Bay shoreline, which is already vulnerable to coastal flooding. The project will significantly improve flood protection for the improved levee segment by raising elevations to the 100-year event plus 3 feet, with additional adaptive capacity for future levee raising, to meet State goals for sea-level rise adaptation by mid-century.

The large historic marsh that occupied what is now much of the City of San Rafael (City), formerly received sediment from San Rafael Creek and would have provided a buffer for suspended sediments and nutrient loads from the initial large settlements in the watershed. Due to vast development in this area, Tiscornia Marsh (which comprises less than 2 percent of the original acreage), is one of the few remaining buffers for reducing sediment and pollutant loads. Expanding the tidal marsh will increase its capacity to improve the quality of waters on San Rafael Creek and the adjacent San Rafael Bay:

- Expanding the existing outboard marsh and protecting its bay edge with a coarse beach will preserve its ability to reduce local turbidity and waterborne pollutants in San Rafael Bay and in the long-term. Preserving the eastern edge from continued erosion will limit the delivery of fine sediments into San Rafael Creek, which over the last several decades has contributed to the need for continued dredging. The expanded marsh will also protect the levee from eroding, further reducing sediment delivery to the Bay waters.
- Reintroduction of the diked marsh to direct tidal action, and expanding Tiscornia Marsh, will introduce a significant, new buffer for waterborne pollutants on San Rafael Creek. Opening this segment of the site to tidal action will allow a portion of creek flows to be diverted to the newly functional tidal marsh on each tidal cycle, meaning that a portion of the creek's waterborne constituents and other urban-derived pollutants will be filtered through the marsh over time. The effects of this filtration will be studied by measuring soil and groundwater conditions through monitoring at the marsh.

Major project elements include the development of a course beach; reconstruction of the eroded tidal marsh; restoring the diked marsh to the bay; shoreline levee improvements; and development of an ecotone slope. The project will also coordinate and synergize with the City's closely related Trash Capture Project, also located at Pickleweed Park. Under the project, Tiscornia Marsh would be restored to its former extents by beneficially reusing dredged material from local sources. A coarse beach would be constructed along the bay ward edge of the restored marsh to resist future erosion. Tidal action would also be restored to the City-owned diked marsh at the north end of Pickleweed Park. Altogether, the project would reconstruct approximately 4 acres of eroded tidal marsh, preserve, and protect the approximately 8 remaining acres of Tiscornia Marsh, and restore

approximately 5 acres of diked marsh by reconnecting it to tidal inundation. The Project would also construct a new 600-foot setback levee and improve approximately 1,100 feet of shoreline levee to achieve greater flood protection, public access, and habitat benefits.

In addition, the project is closely coordinated with the City's related trash capture project for the Kerner storm water pump station. The Kerner Pump Station outfalls to San Rafael Creek, at the northwest corner of Pickleweed Park. The City is designing and constructing a trash capture facility to reduce trash loading to San Rafael Creek and provide further water quality benefits. The proposed trash capture facility will be located within the footprint of the new setback levee constructed under the Tiscornia Marsh project. The Marin Audubon Society and the City continue to coordinate the two projects to provide cohesive benefits.

This project will fund the final design and permitting, to ready the Tiscornia Marsh Project for future construction. This project will also provide some support of the permitting and/or design of the Trash Capture Project. The proposed work will build on the accomplishments of two previous grants, from the Marin Community Foundation (MCF) and the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority (SFBRA), which is funding development of the preliminary project design and CEQA review.

Benefits to Communities

The project lead is Marin Audubon Society, an organization that serves the entire county, and their Canal community partner is the Multicultural Center of Marin (MCM). MCM's mission is to work with diverse immigrant and underserved communities of Marin County in advancing their social, cultural, and economic well-being through self-empowerment programs that encourage participation in the broader civic life of U.S. society. The community at most risk and the primary beneficiary of this project is the adjacent Canal Community, due to experiencing flooding with overtopping or breaching of the levee. The Canal supports the largest disadvantaged community in Marin County, as well as businesses and services (many of which are essential for residents with limited mobility, such as food stores, elementary school, and health clinic). Improving flood protection would allow residents of the Canal and businesses to continue to live and/or work in the community. Increased flood protection will make it possible for businesses, both in the Canal and the larger San Rafael Area, to continue operating, enable jobs and employment opportunities to continue and residents to continue to travel to work in and out of the Canal community to continue supporting regional and local economic needs.

The project team with MCM leadership, will continue to engage the community through expanded outreach: public meetings, field trips, and using various media outlets including radio programs (in English, Spanish and Vietnamese), video and audio public service announcements, and website and social media. A "Resilience Team" will be established with the purpose to empower members of the community to take the lead on climate actions. The team will consist of community members trained by MCM, on how to educate, engage and empower residents to participate in projects, planning, and other

decision processes that affect their well-being. Trained participants will be employed by MCM to do community outreach and education focused on resilience around climate change, sea-level rise, the potential for flooding in their neighborhoods and the Tiscornia project. This approach is based on testing of successful community engagement models, understanding that empowerment of community members is the most effective way to build long-term support, involvement and achieve equitable goals.

During the implementation phase, there will be opportunities for hands-on work that will directly involve community members, such as training in the fields of habitat restoration, horticulture, gardening; and working with Students and Teachers Restoring A Watershed (STRAW) to vegetate the habitat on the reconstructed segments of the levee. Students from Bahia Vista School just a block from the project site have already planted at Tiscornia Marsh. The project will also provide opportunities for local Conservation Corps crews to install native plants and do other restoration activities. Working in collaboration with College of Marin and/or SFSU Romberg Center, future monitoring could potentially combine sea-level rise education and with field surveys by local youth of long-term changes (such as sedimentation, flooding during king tides, etc.). Engagement activities, particularly of the Resilience Team, are designed to introduce members of the community to environmental issues, including climate-related risks, and offer guidance on developing community-informed solutions.

Refer to Exhibit 4c1 for a map of the project location.

Project Timeline
Advanced design plans (60%-90%) will begin in January 2022 and finish in June of that year; 100% design will be completed in January 2023. Timeline to prepare permitting applications and secure various regulatory permits (e.g., Jurisdictional Wetland Delineation, USFWS and NMFS Biological Assessments, and Ecological Functional Assessment) will be completed by March 2023. Community outreach and engagement is ongoing throughout the entire phase of the project. There are no anticipated delays in executing final design and submitting permit support documents for the next phase of the project. However, the timeline to implement the project, currently scheduled for 2023, could be delayed depending on securing additional grant funds for project construction, and identification of suitable source of dredge sediments to restore the marsh. The grantee is investigating nearby dredging projects that best align with the timing when sediments will be needed. Options that could provide the needed quantity of sediments include maintenance dredging of marinas along the San Rafael Canal, Golden Gate Bridge Highway and Transportation District's dredging of the Larkspur Ferry Terminal, and potentially the dredging of the San Rafael Canal by USACE.

Project Financing
Staff recommends that OPC authorize encumbrance of up to $804,000 to Marin Audubon Society for the Tiscornia Marsh Restoration and Sea-Level Rise Adaptation Project. The proposed project may not require expenditure of the full $804,000.

Ocean Protection Council Prop 1	**$804,000**
OPC Total	**$804,000**
Measure AA Grant	$359,900
City of San Rafael	$30,200
Marin Audubon Society	$22,800
Total Non-OPC Match	$412,900
TOTAL	$1,216,900

4d: Middle Struve Slough Water Quality and Habitat Improvement Project

Project Description

This project is a multi-benefit ecosystem and watershed restoration project that improves water quality, native habitat, and regional resilience to climate change. The proposed project will implement watershed restoration and habitat protection measures that will address habitat loss and environmental degradation within the Watsonville Slough System through the enhancement of an 1,800 foot linear wetland and riparian corridor and restoration and enhancement of approximately 5 acres of wetland, grassland, woodland and riparian habitat. Proposed activity will also provide many additional co-benefits, such as flood attenuation, increased resiliency to climate change, and atmospheric greenhouse gas capture, improved access to nature, parks, and trails for Watsonville residents, and provide extensive environmental education, nature experiences, and green jobs training for Watsonville residents.

This project is located in the City of Watsonville in Southern Santa Cruz County in the Pajaro River Watershed. It is located within a branch of the Watsonville Slough System, an approximately 800-acre wetland complex, which includes one of the State's largest remaining contiguous freshwater coastal wetlands. This wetland complex supports over 270 resident and migratory bird species, and 23 native plants and animals that are State and federally listed as threatened, endangered, or species of special concern. The Slough system underlies the City of Watsonville and drains to the Pajaro River mouth at its confluence with the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. The area in which the project will occur has been greatly modified over the past 150 years leading to reduced wetland and watershed function and the ecosystem services they provide, loss of native habitat, and significant water quality impairment. Wetlands on the project site, like those throughout the Pajaro Valley, were drained to enable agriculture and were farmed intensively for many years, largely eliminating native plants and wildlife habitat associated with the marshes, grasslands, and woodlands that occurred on site historically. This process impaired water quality, and as urban development replaced agriculture within the surrounding watershed, water quality issues were greatly increased through untreated stormwater inputs from the surrounding urban areas.

Struve Slough, where proposed work will occur, is 303(d) listed, as impaired by pH, dissolved oxygen, chlorophyll-a, toxicity, turbidity, E. coli bacteria, and fecal coliform bacteria. The project design concept focuses on measures that will reduce sediment in stormwater and lead to significant reductions in E. Coli concentrations through construction of two sediment capture and treatment basins at culvert outfalls which currently deliver untreated urban run-off to the downstream wetlands. The sediment capture and treatment basin design emphasizes measures to increase residence time and allow sediment and pathogens and constituents bound to the sediment, to settle out and remain in the basins. Basins will be maintained on a regular and ongoing basis, keeping sediment and pollutants out of the wetlands. In doing so, the project will improve water quality in on site wetlands as well as downstream wetlands, and the Pajaro River and Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary into which these wetlands drain.

This project will fund finalizing environmental review and permitting, construction of water quality treatment basins, wetland restoration, and public access features, habitat restoration and enhancement, and community engagement. Construction of this project will address lost native habitat and wetland function by restoring and enhancing coastal wetlands and watershed habitat throughout the approximately 5-acre project site. Habitat restoration work will be managed by the non-profit organization, Watsonville Wetlands Watch (WWW), and will be done in a manner consistent with watershed restoration work done over the past 20 years in the slough system watershed with great success in achieving high native cover and enhancement of native structure and habitat function.

Benefits to Communities

This project will provide a large suite of environmental and social benefits for the Watsonville community. The project includes a robust community engagement budget, of which 45% is comprised of matching funds. WWW will oversee the project's community engagement plan with the support of the City's community outreach team and a suite of close project partners that include: Regeneracion Pajaro Valley Climate Action, a local environmental justice climate focused community group will support public outreach and education and community engagement; Community Action Board of Santa Cruz County's Watsonville Works Program, a program that supports local unhoused individuals in helping with environmental cleanup; Amah Mutsun Land Trust (AMLT) and Pajaro Valley Ohlone Indian Council (PVOIC), two active local Native American groups that currently work with WWW and the City on wetland stewardship projects will support implementation and community engagement and education. Grant funds will support community partners in outreach and education efforts, and also support costs associated with on-site student educational field trips and student participation in leadership activities.

The project will provide paid job training opportunities and educational field trips for Watsonville youth, along with a large number of community engagement planting and restoration volunteer days for Watsonville families. At least 600 middle and elementary school students will participate in watershed restoration work through their participation in WWW's after-school education programs. Bilingual interpretive signage and materials will

be developed to support the community engagement goals. Watsonville Area Youth will receive paid stipends to work on this project, through their participation in WWW's Climate Corps Leadership Institute (CCLI), a high school job training program. CCLI offers local youth the opportunity to serve in a leadership role for this project, while learning job skills and career and technical education and receiving a stipend of $500 for each semester they work in the program. Current partners in local restoration work, PVOIC and AMLT will support integration of native and traditional cultural information in interpretive materials. Additional workforce benefits include participation by young adults in the California Conservation Corps, and paid collaborations with project partners, including the above-mentioned Native American groups.

Long-term monitoring data will be collected for both environmental and community benefits. This includes on-going tracking of volunteer support by WWW, as well as on-going water quality and habitat monitoring that is done by the City and WWW through an annual wetland and water quality community science water quality monitoring program, called Project Tierra. This work produces a semi-annual water quality and habitat report card for the slough system that helps to measure effectiveness of restoration projects, wetland and water quality health, and share this information to the public in Spanish and English. These on-going monitoring efforts and public information sharing tools are designed to foster the long-term engagement and participation needed for effective wetland stewardship on this site and throughout the watershed.

Refer to Exhibit 4d1 for a map of the project location.

Project Timeline
Environmental review and permitting is scheduled to be completed by Spring 2022. Construction of the water quality treatment basins and wetland restoration will occur seasonally during Fall and Winter in 2022 and 2023. Native habitat restoration implementation will begin in Fall 2022 and be completed at the end of the project, in December 2024. Community outreach and engagement is ongoing throughout the entire phase of the project. Pre-effectiveness monitoring will occur in Spring 2022, prior to construction, and post- effectiveness monitoring will start in Spring 2024 and end at project completion, in December 2024.

Project Financing
Staff recommends that OPC authorize encumbrance of up to $1,192,523 to the City of Watsonville for the Middle Struve Slough Water Quality and Habitat Improvement Project. The proposed project may not require expenditure of the full $1,192,523.

Ocean Protection Council Prop 1	**$1,192,523**
OPC Total	**$1,192,523**
City of Watsonville (In-Kind Contributions)	$192,123
DWR Disadvantaged Communities Engagement Program	$105,000

CalFire Urban and Community Forestry Program	$5,000
David and Lucille Packard Foundation and other private foundation funds and funds from the Pajaro Valley Unified School District, to support environmental education and youth participation in the Climate Corps Leadership Institute, granted to Watsonville Wetlands Watch	$64,000
Volunteer Labor	$35,000
Total Non-OPC Match	$401,123
TOTAL	$1,593,646

4e: Wilmington Middle School and Community Green Infrastructure Project

Project Description

This is a Wilmington community-driven, nature-based project using an evidence-driven model to bring low-income community, green infrastructure, stormwater management solutions that address the water crisis and local environmental injustices. Wilmington is a neighborhood in Los Angeles, a strong example of a frontline, low-income coastal community of color, suffering from a legacy of environmental injustices. Approximately 70,000 working-class Latinos live in this Harbor community surrounded by the highest concentration of oil refineries in California, the third largest oil field in the country, the busiest port in the United States (Port of Los Angeles), freeways congested with heavy duty vehicles, polluted urban dry and wet water runoff, heavily impacted soils, and some of the highest concentrations of pollution sources in the entire state. Wilmington is at the center of four major freeways: 110, 47, 710, and the 1. The manufacturing zones in the area are defined by these five oil refineries, port processing facilities, and hazardous waste disposal facilities. As demonstrated by these land uses, the area has extremely low amounts of permeable surfaces and high exposure to potential water pollution. The Dominguez Channel runs through Wilmington and leads to the Los Angeles Main Harbor. Both waters are impaired as defined by the Clean Water Act, with known water pollutants in the area including lead, zinc, copper, DDT, PCBs, benzo[a]anthracene, and benzo[a]pyrene. The area's soils are heavily compacted and tend to be impermeable, preventing surface water from infiltrating and reaching groundwater aquifers. In addition to the public health threats posed by the surrounding industry, Wilmington also faces increasing impacts of climate change, including but not limited to a high vulnerability to sea level rise yet low adaptive capacity. These environmental issues are exacerbated due to very little park space, natural landscapes, beach access, and open space throughout Wilmington. This results in a continuous cycle of neglect as potential projects cannot be easily identified. Each of these environmental hazards emit toxic chemicals, diesel soot, nitrous oxides, and other particulates; with the commercial marine complex no more than five blocks from Wilmington Middle School.

This multi-benefit project proposes green infrastructure stormwater management solutions with low impact development (LID) and stormwater mitigation practices, including replacing asphalt and concrete with native plants and trees, and installing bioswales and rain gardens at Wilmington Middle School to reduce runoff volumes and pollutants entering the Dominguez Channel and Los Angeles Harbor. Wilmington Middle School is located at the center of the community and spans 15 acres. The youth, school community, TreePeople, Communities for a Better Environment (CBE), school district, local community and the entire delegation of elected officials representing Wilmington have rallied behind this project because of the direct benefits to mitigate stormwater runoff, safeguard coastal areas, advance equity, improve highly polluted local air quality, and educate, train and empower youth to become future leaders of building local climate and water resilience in a fair, respectful and equitable manner.

The grantee, TreePeople, will partner with Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), Wilmington Middle School, and a local community-based organization, CBE, to implement a nature-based, multi-benefit, green infrastructure stormwater management project on a campus that is largely covered by impermeable asphalt. The project addresses the critical need to implement watershed adaptation projects in order to reduce the impacts of climate change on California's coastal communities and ecosystems and to provide a healthier, greener and more climate-resilient learning environment at Wilmington Middle School. There will be two sites on campus that will go through significant renovations to create outdoor, multi-functional spaces, removing over 14,400 square feet of asphalt and replacing with permeable surfaces. Urban greening components will be added to these sites that include water infiltration "rain gardens" on campus to direct stormwater runoff to an infiltration basin, using trees and shrubs to remove debris and pollution thereby improving water quality. There are several areas across the campus that experience flooding and will be targeted for green infrastructure improvements and BMP implementation to expand the project's water quality impact. An assessment of grading, water accumulation, water retention, and runoff will be completed in order to optimize nature-based stormwater capture and infiltration BMPs, which could include bioswales, infiltration basins, native vegetation, and water diversion in locations that maximize the amount of stormwater capture. Reducing polluted runoff to improve water quality is at the center of this project, while the project also provides other co-benefits to the community such as increased urban green space, carbon sequestration, air quality improvement, and extreme heat mitigation.

This project will fund planning, 100% completion of design/engineering and permitting, implementation/ construction, monitoring and continued community engagement. LAUSD will support the planning, implementation, and monitoring of this project. TreePeople and LAUSD have a formalized Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), allowing the two entities to work collaboratively on efforts such as this one. The MOU and project will serve as a strong model for school greening projects in years to come. TreePeople will work with a design and engineering firm to analyze, identify and implement additional campus improvements that optimize stormwater management and water quality improvements.

CBE will support the community engagement to support TreePeople's efforts to inform, support, and empower the community.

Benefits to Communities
The community will be engaged at every stage of this project. The final planning designs will be finalized with feedback from the Wilmington Middle School community. TreePeople will set up community volunteer events to perform tree and shrub planting across the school during the implementation phase. The planting events will be followed by tree care events to promote long-term investment in the community and extend the learning opportunities. TreePeople will tie the project activities to the delivery of the water-focused component of the Generation Earth program[2] for students through workforce pathways in green jobs, hands-on activities tied to water pollution prevention, water capture and climate resiliency, connection to grade appropriate science curriculum, and completion of environmental service learning projects in their community. Community organizing will consist of hiring people from the community to conduct grassroots level engagement, including reaching out to local stakeholders, canvassing, hosting community meetings with incentives, and providing relevant educational material.

TreePeople will leverage its environmental education programming to encourage the long-term use and care of the green infrastructure improvements on campus. With the support of TreePeople's Generation Earth program, the campus community will gain a sense of ownership over their new campus resources. The implementation of Generation Earth will apply educational programming around water resourcing, urban greening, and community health to students, with the project infrastructure improvements as a vehicle for instruction. Lesson plans will utilize the campus improvements to connect classroom curriculum with their surrounding environment. Beyond the lessons given by the Generation Earth team, TreePeople will equip teachers with programmatic materials and lesson plans to support their delivery of environmental education. Equipping teachers with these resources will encourage the consistent use of the outdoor spaces. Through this model, TreePeople has seen greater returns on community members engaged, volunteer attendance, and community meeting attendance.

Refer to Exhibit 4e1 for a map of the project location.

Project Timeline
The project plans and permitting will be finalized by Fall 2022, and construction will begin in April 2023 and is anticipated to be completed by February 2024. The project will be done with consideration of school year and student use of outdoor areas. Similarly, tree and vegetation installation will be done during appropriate times of year to ensure best possible establishment (November - April). Community outreach and engagement is ongoing throughout the entire phase of the project.

[2] A County Public Works-funded program that annually equips over 14,000 middle and high school students in Los Angeles with environmental skills and knowledge to address environmental issues they are facing in their communities primarily focused on water and waste issues.

Project Financing
Staff recommends that OPC authorize encumbrance of up to $2,269,526 to TreePeople for the Wilmington Middle School and Community Green Infrastructure Project. The proposed project may not require expenditure of the full $2,269,526.

Ocean Protection Council Prop 1	**$2,269,526**
OPC Total	**$2,269,526**
TreePeople (volunteerism)	$39,702
Generation Earth (school education program)	$20,000
Total Non-OPC Match	$59,702
TOTAL	**$2,329,228**

4f: Paradise Creek Wetland Expansion and Park Creation

Project Description
The project consists of demolition of a portion of the existing industrial land use (old welding shop), wetland expansion, creation of a park/educational picnic area, installation of five trash control devices, interpretive signage, and sidewalk improvements. The project is immediately adjacent to Paradise Creek, an estuarine, tidally-influenced wetland comprised of water from the San Diego Bay. Paradise Creek is on the Clean Water Act Section 303(d) List of Impaired Water Segments for phosphorus and also has REC-2, WARM, and WILD beneficial uses per the San Diego Basin Plan. Additionally, the City of National City (National City) has received feedback from local nonprofit organizations and residents that trash is frequently observed in Paradise Creek. Five trash control full-capture devices (FCDs) that capture trash larger than 5mm in diameter (the size of a cigarette butt) will be installed upstream of the Project area, and collect trash from the 1-year, 1-hour storm within the storm drain system, which will prevent trash from discharging into the project area. Furthermore, the Project will have a local and regional watershed impact through creating native wetland habitat for local wildlife in an Environmentally Sensitive Area within the City. Paradise Creek drains to Paradise Marsh (Sweetwater Marsh Unit) which is part of the San Diego Bay National Wildlife Refuge. The wetland expansion allows for connectivity to the salt marsh habitat to improve native wildlife biodiversity, which is suitable for endangered, threatened, migratory, and native species, as well as minimize the localized flooding on nearby roads from tidal influences in the creek. Coastal salt marsh at Paradise Marsh supports species such as the State Endangered Species Act listed Belding's savannah sparrow, clapper rail, and the federally listed endangered plant: salt marsh bird's beak. At the project site, the wetland expansion will filter pollutants, including phosphorus, from overland runoff that discharge directly into Paradise Creek through natural processes. Improvements to the wetland habitat will protect the ecological health of Paradise Creek and the San Diego Bay National Wildlife Refuge.

The Project will reduce flooding in the area by increasing the flood capacity of Paradise Creek. Properties in the Project area are currently at an elevation low enough that flooding overtakes roads, sidewalks and bikeways during small storms. Climate change is expected to lead to an increase in storm frequency and intensity. The Project will help reduce flooding in the public right-of-way that provides access to vital community spaces in the area. Flooding of the right-of-way will further improve since the project will be completed in conjunction with the adjacent pedestrian improvements project that is fully funded by an Urban Greening Grant which is anticipated to commence July 2021. Overland flow will be conveyed through the trees and vegetation for the park and expanded wetland to help reduce runoff pollution into Paradise Creek. Historic pollutants from the welding shop will no longer be released into Paradise Creek during storm events or tidal elevation changes. Creation of an expanded wetland area will lead to less extreme velocities in the creek and less flooding which will reduce bank erosion downstream of the Project. Expanding the wetland area helps restore Paradise Creek to a more natural hydrologic system and supports long-term water supply benefits by contributing water via infiltration to the underlying aquifer (Sweetwater Valley Groundwater Basin) used for drinking water supply.

Benefits to Communities

As a critically underserved community, National City is greatly in need of additional green spaces, and closely follows the vision of the community's Specific Plan. The students at Kimball Elementary School and residents of Paradise Creek Apartments just south of the project area will be the largest beneficiaries of the new green space. National City is known to have air quality issues as identified by San Diego County's Air Pollution Control District. Children in National City suffer disproportionately from asthma symptoms than other children in San Diego County. Additionally, the City has a higher rate of hospitalizations due to chronic obstructive pulmonary disease than the other regions of San Diego County. Historical industrial pollutants that affect water and air quality include particulates such as lead, nickel, zinc, iron oxide, copper, cadmium, fluorides, manganese, and chromium. This project will help filter pollutants and debris through the wetland expansion park and trash capture devices. The creation of additional green space will provide multiple Community benefits, including but not limited to: improving water quality, protecting groundwater, preventing flooding, improving air quality, producing habitat for wildlife, and provides a place for Community to gather and connect with nature and explore the watershed perspective of urban stream management through this project.

National City is dedicated to working with nonprofits and civic groups, such as the Paradise Creek Educational Park, Inc., A Reason to Survive (ARTS), Ocean Connectors, National School District, and the San Diego Regional Climate Collaborate to gain feedback and look for ways to collaborate and will reach out to them during the conceptual design stage. The Project design team will host a series of community workshops to engage the community before moving into final design. Given the proximity of the Project to Kimball Elementary, the community workshops will be held at the school through its partnership with National School District. The Workshops will also be hosted by City staff, who are bilingual and can engage residents who are Spanish speakers. Community members will

be involved in the creation of the art installation within the newly created educational/ picnic area which will be led by the local nonprofit ARTS. Development of the concept and design for the art installation will empower these local community leaders and empower residents to be involved with the design.

As part of the Project's Community Engagement Plan, the Project will play a significant role in increasing environmental awareness and education for students at nearby Kimball Elementary. The City intends to discuss potential educational opportunities with its partner, the National City School District to engage other K-12 schools on the project. The City will recommend and encourage the School District administrators and teachers to develop programs around the local wetland ecology and water quality elements, as well as make use of the new education area as part of their watershed curriculum. Field trips will be organized to view Paradise Creek, study the creek's ecosystem and connection to the Sweetwater Marsh, San Diego Bay National Wildlife Refuge and San Diego Bay. There will also be opportunities for classes to be conducted outdoors once the educational picnic area is implemented. Bilingual interpretive signage will be installed at the project site, which will also provide historical context of the project site, restoration and wetland improvements, and visions for a larger park system.

Refer to Exhibit 4f1 for a map of the project location.

Project Timeline
It's anticipated that planning, design, engineering, and environmental permitting will commence January 2022 and be fully completed by Spring 2023. Implementation is scheduled to begin January 2023 and be completed by December 2024. Educational materials, community outreach and engagement will be ongoing throughout the entire phase of the project.

Project Financing
Staff recommends that OPC authorize encumbrance of up to $957,000 to the City of National City for the Paradise Creek Wetland Expansion and Park Creation. The proposed project may not require expenditure of the full $957,000.

Ocean Protection Council Prop 1	**$957,000**
OPC Total	**$957,000**
City of National City (in-kind)	$111,578
Total Non-OPC Match	$111,578
TOTAL	**$1,068,578**

CONSISTENCY WITH CALIFORNIA OCEAN PROTECTION ACT:

The various aforementioned projects are consistent with the Ocean Protection Act, Division 26.5 of the Public Resources Code, because they are consistent with trust-fund allowable projects, defined in Public Resources Code Section 35650(b)(2) as projects which:

- Eliminate or reduce threats to coastal and ocean ecosystems, habitats, and species.
- Improve coastal water quality.
- Allow for increased public access to, and enjoyment of, ocean and coastal resources, consistent with sustainable, long-term protection and conservation of those resources.
- Improve management, conservation, and protection of coastal waters and ocean ecosystems.
- Protect, conserve, and restore coastal waters and ocean ecosystems.
- Address coastal water contamination from biological pathogens.
- Provide funding for adaptive management, planning coordination, monitoring, research, and other necessary activities to minimize the adverse impacts of climate change on California's ocean ecosystem.