



Contra  
Costa  
County

To: Board of Supervisors  
From: John Kopchik, Director, Conservation & Development Department  
Date: November 14, 2017

Subject: Knightsen Wetland Restoration & Flood Protection Project

## **RECOMMENDATION(S):**

ADOPT Resolution No. 2017/393 supporting the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy's Knightsen Wetland Restoration and Flood Protection Project application to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy's Ecosystem Restoration and Water Quality Grant Program for up to \$1,500,000 in grant funds.

## **FISCAL IMPACT:**

No impact.

## **BACKGROUND:**

A history of severe flooding and poor storm water quality prompted the Contra Costa County Public Works Department, in conjunction with the Knightsen Community Services District (CSD), to conduct a feasibility study to determine the best approach to address drainage concerns in the Knightsen region. The flooding and the associated contamination of ground and surface waters from contaminants in agricultural tailwater and overflowing

☒ APPROVE

☐ OTHER

☒ RECOMMENDATION OF CNTY ADMINISTRATOR

☐ RECOMMENDATION OF BOARD COMMITTEE

Action of Board On: **11/14/2017** ☒ APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED ☐ OTHER

Clerks Notes:

### **VOTE OF SUPERVISORS**

AYE: John Gioia, District I  
Supervisor  
Candace Andersen, District II  
Supervisor  
Karen Mitchoff, District IV  
Supervisor

ABSENT: Diane Burgis, District III  
Supervisor  
Federal D. Glover, District V  
Supervisor

I hereby certify that this is a true and correct copy of an action taken and entered on the minutes of the Board of Supervisors on the date shown.

ATTESTED: November 14, 2017

David Twa, County Administrator and Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

By: June McHuen, Deputy

Contact: Abigail Fateman,  
DCD-ECCCHC

cc:

septic systems has been an ongoing problem that has negatively impacted human health, agriculture, water quality and habitat. The initial feasibility study completed in 2002 concluded that the most effective approach to alleviate the flooding and address water quality problems is to restore or create wetlands that can accept storm water and identified suitable areas for this work.

## BACKGROUND: (CONT'D)

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A more recent study has shed new light on the findings of the 2002 flood protection feasibility study and contemplated the possibility of an even more ambitious restoration project. Working with the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy (Conservancy), the San Francisco Estuary Institute released the comprehensive East Contra Costa County Historical Ecology Study in November 2012. This study mapped historical land cover in the area for the first time and led to some surprising findings related to the project area. The study demonstrated that the area previously identified as suitable for restoration (project area) which is now almost entirely cultivated land, once contained a striking mosaic of tidal wetland, alkali wetland/meadow, oak savanna, and rare interior sand dune. While it may not be possible to rewind the clock, the new study identifies the potential for an extensive restoration project that could include multiple types of restored wetlands as well as restored dunes and oak savanna.

The Conservancy has been working with the East Bay Regional Park District, Contra Costa County Flood Control District, and the Knightsen Community Services District to design a multi-objective project that will:

- Restore habitat for special status species;
- Protect the community of Knightsen from flooding and make the region more resilient to climate change;
- Protect and improve water quality in Knightsen and surrounding Delta waterways; and
- Provide recreational opportunities.

In January 2016, the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy worked with the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) to support EBRPD's acquisition of a 645 acre parcel -- a property that was identified in the 2002 study as key to ameliorating Knightsen's flooding problems.

In mid-2016, the Conservancy, with support from the Knightsen Community Services District (KCSO), secured a \$240,000 grant of Proposition 1 funds that are administered by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. These funds are being used to collect baseline biological and hydrologic data that will inform the design of the project.

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy has issued a call for proposals for its Delta Conservancy Ecosystem Restoration and Water Quality Grant Program. The East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy ("Conservancy") will be submitting a grant proposal for the Knightsen Wetland Restoration and Flood Protection Project of up to \$1,500,000. The grant will supplement the \$240,000 already secured for the project from Proposition 1, and fund the completion of the planning process by developing construction plans and securing permitting to bring the project to shovel ready status.

The East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy is seeking a resolution of support

from the County Board of Supervisors for the project, which is a recommended for inclusion with the grant proposal.

*NOTE: This item was originally intended to be reviewed by the Transportation, Water and Infrastructure Committee (TWIC), however, the Committee's regular November meeting was canceled, necessitating that staff bring this directly to the Board of Supervisors.*

CONSEQUENCE OF NEGATIVE ACTION:

If the Board of Supervisors does not adopt the resolution in support of the project, the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy's proposal to the Delta Conservancy Ecosystem Restoration and Water Quality Grant Program will be seriously compromised and substantially reduce the competitiveness of the grant application.

ATTACHMENTS

Resolution No. 2017/393