



NOSSAMAN LLP | Memorandum

TO: Monterey County Legislative Committee

FROM: Ashley S. Walker, Senior Policy Advisor

DATE: March 8, 2021

RE: Strategic Grant Services Program: Grants Update

Summary of Recent Program Efforts

- a. California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) – State Budget Funding for Interlake Tunnel:** The WRA and Nossaman has continued to meet regularly with CDFW regarding the grant agreement needed in order to secure the funding that was allocated in the 2019-20 State budget for the Interlake Tunnel Project. The final agreement was presented to the WRA Finance Committee on February 5 for approval, the WRA Board of Directors on February 16 for approval, and the WRA Board of Supervisors on March 2. Now that the grant agreement has been approved, WRA will send this to CDFW for final sign off by June 2021. The goal is to have the agreement secured prior to the end of the fiscal year, to ensure the funds are secured for the project, and we are on track to do just that.
- b. US Fish and Wildlife (USFW)/California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) – Habitat Conservation Plan development:** The County was awarded a Section 6 \$1 million grant for Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) in April 2020. Since then, the County had been trying to get additional information regarding their award. The WRA requested Nossaman's assistance on the lack of communication regarding the grant award, as the County needed to get information about drawing down these funds in order to continue work on the HCP. Nossaman contacted CDFW's statewide legislative director, as well as the regional manager, requesting an urgent response. CDFW's regional manager responded in a timely manner, and the following week the County was sent a grant agreement to be executed in order to draw down the \$1 million in funding. The agreement will be finalized in June or July of this year.
- c. San Lucas Drinking Water Project:** The new project alternative would convert the temporary well to a permanent well and add a pipeline to an existing 300 gallon water storage tank. The County provided a detailed memo to the State Water Board on January 12 outlining additional information regarding the alternative project proposal to be approved for a Drinking Water State Revolving Fund grant. The State Water Board will be providing the County comments with questions and suggestions related to the memo on the new project. Nossaman is coordinating a follow up meeting in the next couple of weeks with the State Water Board to discuss those comments and next steps.
- d. Proposition 68 Statewide Parks Program – San Lorenzo:** Nossaman met with the Public Works, Facilities and Parks Department several times to discuss the application for San Lorenzo Park. The San Lorenzo Park project will include riparian corridor enhancement, group BBQ area, children's play structure, splash pad, trail enhancements, and more.

Nossaman reviewed the application and provided feedback on competitiveness, as well as contacted State Parks for additional feedback about our project competitiveness. Applications are due March 12, 2021

- e. **CRFREE and Carmel Lagoon:** Nossaman met with County staff to discuss the status of these two projects in terms of outstanding grant applications and funding needs.

The CFREE project is awaiting final approval for the nearly \$23 million grant application that is currently pending. The application issues regarding duplication of Federal programs was resolved. The application is considered to be funding, pending the FEMA environmental review process. The CRFREE project is also awaiting award announcements regarding the County's pending Coastal Watershed Flood Reduction Program Grant for \$5,147,150. If the County successfully receives these two grants, and retains the current grant funds they have been awarded, there will only be a small funding gap remaining to fill.

The Carmel Lagoon project is in need of \$246,000 to finish the EIR process that will finalize the selection of a project. The project selection is slated to be complete in the summer of 2022. Nossaman believes the potential for a water bond on the 2022 ballot could be an opportunity for funding the Carmel Lagoon project.

- f. **Grant Track:** See attached.