



Board Report

File #: WRAG 19-017, **Version:** 1

Receive the Annual Report to the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers for the Salinas River Stream Maintenance Program 2018 Work Season; and authorize the General Manager to execute the Certification of Compliance verifying compliance with the Terms and Conditions of the Regional General Permit.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Monterey County Water Resources Agency Board of Directors:

- a. Receive the Annual Report to the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers for the Salinas River Stream Maintenance Program 2018 Work Season; and
- b. Authorize the General Manager to execute the Certification of Compliance verifying compliance with the Terms and Conditions of the Regional General Permit.

SUMMARY/DISCUSSION:

This report summarizes the 2018 activities of the Salinas River Stream Maintenance Program (SMP). The objective for the SMP is to reduce flood risk to land adjacent to the Salinas River while maintaining or enhancing natural habitat and ecological and hydrological processes. This is achieved through vegetation maintenance, sediment management, and non-native vegetation removal primarily in designated secondary or high flow channels outside of the low flow channel. The Program Area runs from river mile 2 to 94 and includes three tributaries. It is then divided up into seven River Management Units (RMUs). This Annual Report provides regulatory agencies and interested parties with an overview of the work completed during the previous maintenance season and the program's compliance with the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers' permit conditions. It also allows the Monterey County Water Resources Agency (MCWRA) to summarize and analyze the project success and impacts for future planning activities. The program is permitted through 2021.

The SMP is a collaborative program which has formalized a partnership between multiple agencies, landowners, and lessees. The landowners and program participants formed the Salinas River Stream Maintenance Program River Management Unit Association (RMU Association), a California non-profit in order to efficiently and effectively support the implementation and reporting of the SMP. The RMU Association continues to grow and advocate for improvements to the SMP. The Resource Conservation District of Monterey County (RCDMC) received an updated Routine Maintenance Agreement for the Program from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife in June of 2017. Both the MCWRA and the RCDMC monitor regulatory compliance.

Stream maintenance activities were approved for both the early and regular work seasons. Work began on Wednesday, September 5, 2018 and finished by November 15th. Maintenance activities were performed in 6 of the 7 RMUs with treatment occurring in 17 Maintenance Areas and 1 Selective Treatment Area. A total of 92.7 acres of native and non-native vegetation removal occurred within the Maintenance Areas including 2.1 acres of initial treatment and 90.6 acres of retreatment. Sediment was removed from one Maintenance Area. As mitigation for program impacts, arundo was removed via herbicide application and/or mowing on 74.9 acres outside Maintenance Areas in RMUs 3, 4, and 6, including 2.6 acres of initial treatment and 72.3 acres of retreatment. No tree planting or bar ripping was conducted. More arundo mitigation has been initiated under the SMP to-date than is required for project impacts, therefore no new arundo mitigation is required to be

initiated in 2019. No new tree planting projects are required for 2018 impacts, but supplemental planting for previous years' impacts will be needed to address low survivorship of planted trees.

Biological surveys for species of concern were conducted prior to work within specified time windows, and protective measures were followed during all project activities. All personnel involved in on-site work were trained in permit conditions, project protocols, and species identification by qualified staff. Confirmed special status wildlife found in or near work sites included one active American badger den, two adult western pond turtles, four coast horned lizards, and 278 dusky-footed woodrat nests. No state- or federally- threatened or endangered animals or plants were observed. No-disturbance buffers were placed around known and potential habitats like burrows and woodrat houses and buffers were observed during work activities.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The Resource Conservation District of Monterey County, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, The National Marine Fisheries Service, The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, The California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and The Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board.

FINANCING:

None

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Approved by: _____
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Attachments:

1. Board Order
2. Salinas River Stream Maintenance Program 2018 Work Season: Annual Report to United States Army Corps of Engineers
3. USACE Certification of Compliance