



Monterey County

Item No.

Board Report

Board of Supervisors
Chambers
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor
Salinas, CA 93901

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Ratify the Annual Report to the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers for the Salinas River Stream Maintenance Program 2020 Work Season; and ratify the General Manager's execution of 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. Ratify the Annual Report to the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers for the Salinas River Stream Maintenance Program 2020 Work Season; and
- b. Ratify the General Manager's execution of the Certification of Compliance verifying compliance with the Terms and Conditions of the Regional General Permit.

SUMMARY/DISCUSSION:

This report summarizes the 2020 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, October 14, 2020 and finished, per an authorized extension, by November 30th. Maintenance activities were performed in 5 of the 7 RMUs with treatment occurring in 23 Maintenance Areas and 1 Selective Treatment Area. A total of 124.4 acres of native and non-native vegetation removal occurred within the Maintenance Areas including 6.17 acres of initial treatment and 118.2 acres of retreatment. Sediment was removed from two Maintenance Areas including one secondary channel and one tributary. As mitigation for program impacts, arundo was removed via herbicide application and/or mowing on 81.4 acres outside secondary channels in RMUs 3, 4, and 6, including 4.17 acres of initial treatment and 120.2 acres of retreatment. For tree removal mitigation, cottonwood planting occurred at RMU 4. Bar ripping was not conducted as part of this year's maintenance activities. No new tree planting projects are required for 2020 impacts, however, continued tree planting survivorship monitoring under previous projects occurred.

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 two active American badger dens, and 116 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. The 2020 Work Season Annual Report was submitted on March 31, 2021 to the United States Army Corps of Engineers with the signed Certificate of Compliance.

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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Attachments:

1. SRSMP 2020 Work Season: Annual Report to United States Army Corps of Engineers
2. Signed USACE Certification of Compliance
3. Board Order