

## Project Summary Sheet

Project Name: Pescadero-Butano Creek

Tracking No: 4012

Location: In Pescadero Marsh on Butano Creek, County: San Mateo  
Pescadero CA

Project Sponsor: San Mateo County Resource Conservation District

Point of Contact: Mike Ednoff, (650) 712-7765, Mike.Ednoff@sanmatorcd.org

Co-applicant(s): None.

Assembly District: 19

Senate District: 12

Project Description (including size): The project would proceed in four phases to seek an engineered solution to siltation or other blockage resulting in annual flooding of Pescadero Road and adjacent private property. Phase I includes seeking conservation easement commitments, preparing and administering a RFP for design, selecting a design consultant, and preparing a design contract. Phase II is alternative development and selection, project design, and permit identification. Phase III consists of permitting, preparing and administering a RFP for implementation, selecting a contractor, preparing agreements, final design, executing easements, and implementation. Phase IV follows up by monitoring easements and maintaining the improvements. Possible project elements: reconnect creek to floodplain, increase flow into the Pescadero Marsh, establish a vegetation management program, enhance the riparian corridor, protect agricultural land using conservation easements, move buildings, improve roads, bridges, and drainage facilities, and modify levees.

Flood Benefits: Natural and social processes have combined to reduce the historic flood capacity of Butano Creek to a fraction of its amount 150 years ago. The creek at Pescadero Road Bridge has gone from 100 feet wide and 10 feet deep to 10 feet wide and 1 foot deep. Levees, beaver dams, and development have blocked the historic floodplains on both sides. By the 1980s flooding of Pescadero Road and adjacent properties was a chronic problem. By the 1990s, the primary floodplain was overgrown with cattails. Now the Butano Creek channel is completely filled with sediment and all flow is forced out across adjacent lands. Agricultural parcels east of the creek are severely flood-damaged every year. The Corps of Engineers estimates average annual flood damage of \$546,000. The project offers no predetermined solution to the problem, but proposes to seek one through an organized effort, resulting in sediment storage upstream in Butano Creek and transported through the marsh to the Pacific Ocean; reduction in damage to agricultural lands; reduction in other property damage and elimination of the potential for loss of life. This is to be accomplished by reconnecting historic floodplains to the channel, increasing the

flow in the main channel under Pescadero Road, and enhancing the riparian zone.

Agricultural Benefits: Farming is well established in the area and at the project site, and is the basis for the economy of Pescadero, a community of about 700 people. Most private lands are enrolled in Williamson Act contracts. There are six agricultural parcels on the site, all either classed prime farmland or farmland of statewide importance. The farmlands in the area are unlikely candidates for urban development, but their viability as farms is now questionable because of the flooding. The project would reduce the incidence of flooding on these lands. One area of about 15 acres, now completely unfarmable because of annual flooding, would be restored to production. Other sites would be recovered from frequent flooding and marginalized production to occasional flooding and healthy production.

Agricultural Land Conserved, acres, if any: Not determined.

Wildlife Benefits: The Butano Creek watershed, including the project area, is critical habitat for at least 10 endangered or threatened species. The Pescadero Marsh State Preserve, immediately downstream of the project, is inhabited by 235 species of birds, including 68 nesting species; 33 species of amphibians and reptiles, and 21 species of fish. The Marsh and the Alder Thicket upstream of the project contain 380 plant species in 5 distinct habitats. Many of these flora and fauna are in the project area also. The area is a significant environmental resource. The project would probably result in minimal physical change to the environment, but could add several acres to the riparian zone along Butano Creek, restore 3 to 5 acres of riparian floodplain, and allow the entire system of thicket-floodplain-marsh to operate more naturally.

Wildlife Habitat Conserved, acres, if any: Not determined.

Total area conserved: Not determined.

Other Benefits: The project would improve emergency access, which is now severely impacted by flooding. Improvement in farm viability would improve economic conditions for the entire community, which includes substantial contingents of farm laborers and elderly people. The incidence of flooding historic buildings, including the Native Sons Hall and IDES Building, would be reduced.

Total Cost: \$1,245,650

FPCP Cost: \$1,245,650

Funding Partners and Share of Cost: None.