



COUNTY OF SONOMA

575 ADMINISTRATION
DRIVE, ROOM 102A
SANTA ROSA, CA 95403

SUMMARY REPORT

Agenda Date: 5/19/2026

To: Sonoma County Board of Supervisors

Department or Agency Name(s): Sonoma County Regional Parks

Staff Name and Phone Number: Bert Whitaker and Minona Heaviland, 707-565-2041

Vote Requirement: Majority

Supervisorial District(s): Fifth

Title:

Agreement with Caltrans to Fund Riparian Enhancements at Carrington Coast Ranch Regional Park and Open Space Preserve

Recommended Action:

Adopt a Resolution making responsible agency findings under the California Environmental Quality Act, authorizing Sonoma County Regional Parks to enter into an agreement with the State of California, acting by and through its Department of Transportation (Caltrans), to provide habitat enhancements to Carrington Coast Ranch Regional Park and Open Space Preserve to compensate for impacts incurred while conducting culvert rehabilitation and road maintenance along Highway 1.

Executive Summary:

The project will restore and enhance riparian habitat and wetlands at Carrington Coast Ranch Regional Park and Open Space Preserve. Through a Cooperative Agreement, Caltrans will reimburse Sonoma County Regional Parks up to \$1,238,000 over five years for actual costs to host a mitigation project compensating for impacts to wetlands and riparian areas resulting from Highway 1 repair work.

Discussion:

Sonoma County Regional Parks operates a property north of Bodega Bay, along Highway 1, known as the Carrington Coast Ranch Regional Park and Open Space Preserve (Carrington Preserve). The Preserve encompasses over 300 acres and is subject to a conservation easement held by the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District (District). Mitigation activities within the easement are allowed, subject to review and approval by the District.

Carrington Preserve includes coastal prairie and scrub, wetlands, rolling hills, remnants of a historic dairy ranch, and expansive coastal views. However, non-native cypress and eucalyptus trees planted during the historic ranching era have altered site hydrology and suppressed native plant growth in wetland and riparian areas. In addition, construction of Highway 1 modified hydrologic patterns, contributing to degradation of these habitats. The project will address these impacts by restoring natural hydrologic processes and reestablishing native plant communities.

Caltrans is currently implementing the Sonoma 1 Culvert Rehabilitation Project along State Route 1 in Sonoma County, from Post Mile 30.8 to Post Mile 40.6, between Mill Gulch and approximately 0.5 miles south of Miller Creek. The project is subject to permitting requirements from several regulatory agencies, including the

California Department of Fish and Wildlife, San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board, State Water Resource Control Board, Sonoma County Local Coastal Program, and the California Coastal Commission.

To satisfy mitigation requirements, Caltrans proposes to restore and enhance 0.22 acres of degraded drainage features in the northern portion of Carrington Preserve. The scope of work, including restoration activities and five years of maintenance and monitoring, is outlined in the attached Agreement. The total estimated cost for these efforts is \$1,238,000.

The Carrington Preserve project has been identified as appropriate to mitigate potential environmental impacts of the transportation projects, in consultation with and upon the approval of the appropriate (above stated) regulatory bodies (14 C.C.R. § 15096). By taking part in the mitigation work included in the environmental planning under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) conducted by Caltrans, County of Sonoma acts as a “responsible agency” with respect to the referenced Caltrans Highway 1 transportation projects. As such, staff has reviewed the Mitigated Negative Declarations and Negative Declaration with respect to the overall transportation projects, and recommends the Board make findings as a responsible agency that concur with the findings of Caltrans under CEQA and authorize staff to submit a notice of determination with respect to same.

Staff recommends the Board adopt the proposed resolution making findings under CEQA concurring in the analysis of Caltrans with respect to the projects for which the current item is proposed as mitigation and authorizing and directing the Regional Parks Director to enter into the proposed agreement with Caltrans.

Strategic Plan:

This item directly supports the County’s Five-year Strategic Plan and is aligned with the following pillar, goal, and objective.

Pillar: Climate Action and Resiliency

Goal: Goal 5: Maximize opportunities for mitigation of climate change and adaptation through land conservation work and land use policies

Objective: Objective 2: Develop policies to maximize carbon sequestration and minimize loss of natural carbon sinks including old growth forests, the Laguna de Santa Rosa, and rangelands. Encourage agricultural and open space land management to maximize sequestration.

Racial Equity:

Was this item identified as an opportunity to apply the Racial Equity Toolkit?

No

Prior Board Actions:

None

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY25-26 Adopted	FY26-27 Projected	FY27-28 Projected
Budgeted Expenses	\$0	\$133,000	\$1,105,000
Additional Appropriation Requested			

Total Expenditures	\$0	\$133,000	\$1,105,000
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal	\$0	\$133,000	\$1,105,000
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
General Fund Contingencies			
Total Sources	\$0	\$133,000	\$1,105,000

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

The agreement will lead to Caltrans funding Sonoma County Regional Parks over a five-year period for work on the riparian enhancement project. The FY26-27 funds will be transferred from Caltrans to Sonoma County Regional Parks to work with a consultant on planning, CEQA, and permitting support for the project. Starting in FY27-28, the construction and maintenance funds will be spent and then reimbursed by Caltrans based on actual expenses over 5 years. Funds will be requested for Regional Parks' FY 26-27 budget through a Consolidated Budget Adjustment.

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

None

Attachments:

Cooperative Agreement
Resolution

Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board:

Cooperative Agreement Exhibitions