



October 29, 2018

Governing Board of the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority
Attn: Dave Pine
1515 Clay Street, 10th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Chairman Pine and Members of the Restoration Authority Governing Board,

The Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society, the Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter, the Committee for Green Foothills and the California Native Plant Society, Santa Clara Valley Chapter are pleased to support the City of Palo Alto's (City) application for Measure AA grant funding for the Renzel Marsh Restoration and Enhancement Project (RREP). Our non-profit organizations promote the protection and enjoyment of native plants and wildlife and restoration of the natural habitats they require in order to persist and thrive in our region. Together, our organizations represent thousands of members in Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties. The Renzel Marsh Restoration and Enhancement Project will improve habitat connectivity to the Bay in a fragmented section of the Palo Alto Baylands, enhance habitat, and provide public access to one of the City's unique Open Space Preserves.

Renzel Marsh (Marsh) was disconnected from the Bay decades ago, resulting in fragmented salt marsh and upland habitat. The site encircles a former radiotelegraph station, and is wedged between a non-active landfill, Hwy-101, Palo Alto's Regional Water Quality Control Plant, Matadero Creek, and commercial development. Previous restoration efforts in the early 1990s included construction of a culvert to restore tidal connectivity to the Bay and a freshwater pond utilizing treated wastewater for freshwater habitat. However, tidal connectivity has been insufficient to penetrate much of the Marsh, resulting in low quality salt marsh habitat.

RREP seeks to implement concepts developed in the City's Baylands Comprehensive Conservation Plan (BCCP). The BCCP is a collaborative plan being developed by City staff and local stakeholders, to guide conservation, recreational and educational activities in the Baylands for the next 15 years and beyond. This project seeks to restore and enhance approximately 70 acres of the Marsh to high quality salt marsh, expanding the habitat for protected species such as the Salt Marsh Harvest Mouse and Ridgeway's Rail. A hydrologically disconnected remnant slough will be restored to provide greater tidal connectivity and the existing culvert and topography will be evaluated to more efficiently deliver tidal waters throughout the Marsh. Pending input from BCCP stakeholders, new trails will be established improving public access to

the Marsh. New signage will educate the public regarding the history, science, and benefits of the Renzel Marsh.

The Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society, the Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter, the Committee for Green Foothills and the California Native Plant Society, Santa Clara Valley Chapter urge you to consider the importance of the Renzel Marsh Restoration and Enhancement Project to restore Baylands habitat, and to provide full and fair consideration of the City's funding application.


Sincerely,



Shani Kleinhaus, Ph.D.
Environmental Advocate
Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society



Alice Kaufman,
Legislative Advocacy Director
Committee for Green Foothills



Katja Irvin,
Co-Chair, Conservation Committee
Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter



Linda Ruthruff,
Conservation Chair
California Native Plant Society,
Santa Clara Valley Chapter

cc: Dan Patten, Associate Engineer, City of Palo Alto