



## Mini-Grants Program Overview (Pilot Program)

# Safe, Clean Water and Natural Flood Protection Program



The Safe, Clean Water (SCW) mini-grants program is designed to provide seed funding to encourage broader and/or long-term community engagement in wildlife habitat restoration and watershed stewardship activities in Santa Clara County. For the pilot year, mini-grants will be awarded to support SCW program priority D3 to Restore Wildlife Habitat. Projects funded under the mini-grants program must provide the following benefits:

- Enhance creek and bay ecosystems
- Improve fish passage and habitat
- Increase community awareness and understanding of watershed stewardship

### Eligibility

- Proposed project must be located in Santa Clara County
- Applicant is one of the following entities:
  - Local agency or municipality
  - Special district
  - Organized community group with an established structure (must identify individual responsible for signing agreement, insurance, etc.)
  - 501(c)(3) nonprofit
  - School, community college, or university (public or nonprofit)
- Demonstrate matching funds of at least 25% of total project cost (monetary or in-kind)

### Restrictions

- Only one mini-grant will be awarded for each project
- Projects must be completed within two years following the date of executed agreement
- All applicants must provide a signed IRS W-9 tax form
- Grantees must agree to a waiver of liability that releases the District from any liability associated with the grant funding
- For creek and bay cleanup projects, staff will review location of proposed cleanup site to ensure that activities are spread throughout the county and not concentrated in same areas

### Funds Available

Board has authorized \$200,000 for the pilot program. Applicants can request up to \$5,000 per project, however, partial or full funding amount will be at the discretion of program staff. No more than \$5,000 will be awarded per project.

### Timeline

Mini-grant applicants will be notified of funding status between 4-6 weeks of submitting application. If awarded, program staff will work with grantee to finalize agreement and grantee will receive the initial 50% of the grant award to commence project. Projects must all be completed within two years of executed agreement date. Once project is completed, grantee will receive remaining 50% of grant.

## Minimum Requirements and Evaluation Criteria

### Minimum Requirements

- Project must address the District's Safe, Clean Water and Natural Flood Protection program priority goals. For the pilot program, priority D3 Restore Wildlife Habitat goals must be achieved through one or more of the following:
  - Enhance creek and bay ecosystems
  - Improve fish passage and habitat
  - Increase community awareness and understanding of watershed stewardship
- Applicant must be one of the following entities in Santa Clara County:
  - Local agency or municipality
  - Special district
  - 501(c)(3) nonprofit or fiscally sponsored by a 501(c)(3)
  - School, community college, or university (public or nonprofit)
  - Organized community group with an established structure – group must be able to identify an individual who will be responsible for signing the agreement, accepting any taxes resulting from grant award, securing any insurance requirement, if necessary.
- Project scope must include the following:
  - Proposed activities
  - Expenditure plan
  - Timeline/schedule
- The applicant must show evidence of a 25% funding match (25% of total project cost)
- The project must be completed within two years following the execution of the agreement

### Evaluation Criteria

- Community involvement and outreach:
  - Does the project include educational and/or outreach opportunities related to the priority D3 goals?
  - Does the project provide an opportunity for media coverage and will media be invited to attend?
  - Will there be opportunities for Water District Board members to participate in the outreach and/or media events?
- Success Measurements:
  - Does the project have measurable outcomes?
  - Are outcome measurements included as part of the proposed project's activities?

### **Sample Projects**

- Educational activities (workshops, trainings, tours) or development of outreach materials that focuses watershed stewardship and wildlife restoration
- Physical improvements, such as invasive plant removal or native planting on accessible sites
- Surveys to identify open space needs, trail accessibility, etc.
- Research projects that benefit the restoration of wildlife or support trails and open space accessibility
- Cleanup activities that enhances creek and bay ecosystems