

# Priority Conservation Area (PCA) Grant Program



ASSOCIATION OF BAY AREA GOVERNMENTS  
METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Joint MTC Planning Committee with the  
ABAG Administrative Committee  
December 8, 2023

# Plan Bay Area 2050 and PCAs



**Guiding Principle:  
Healthy**



A **Healthy** Bay Area where the region's natural resources, open space, clean water and clean air are conserved and the region actively reduces its environmental footprint and protects residents from environmental impacts.

**Plan Element:  
Environment**



The first-ever **Environment Element** prioritizes the preservation and improvement of land, air and water in Bay Area communities and enhanced access to outdoor open spaces.

**Key Themes**



**Reduce Risks from Hazards**

**Expand Access to Parks and Open Space**

**Key Strategies**

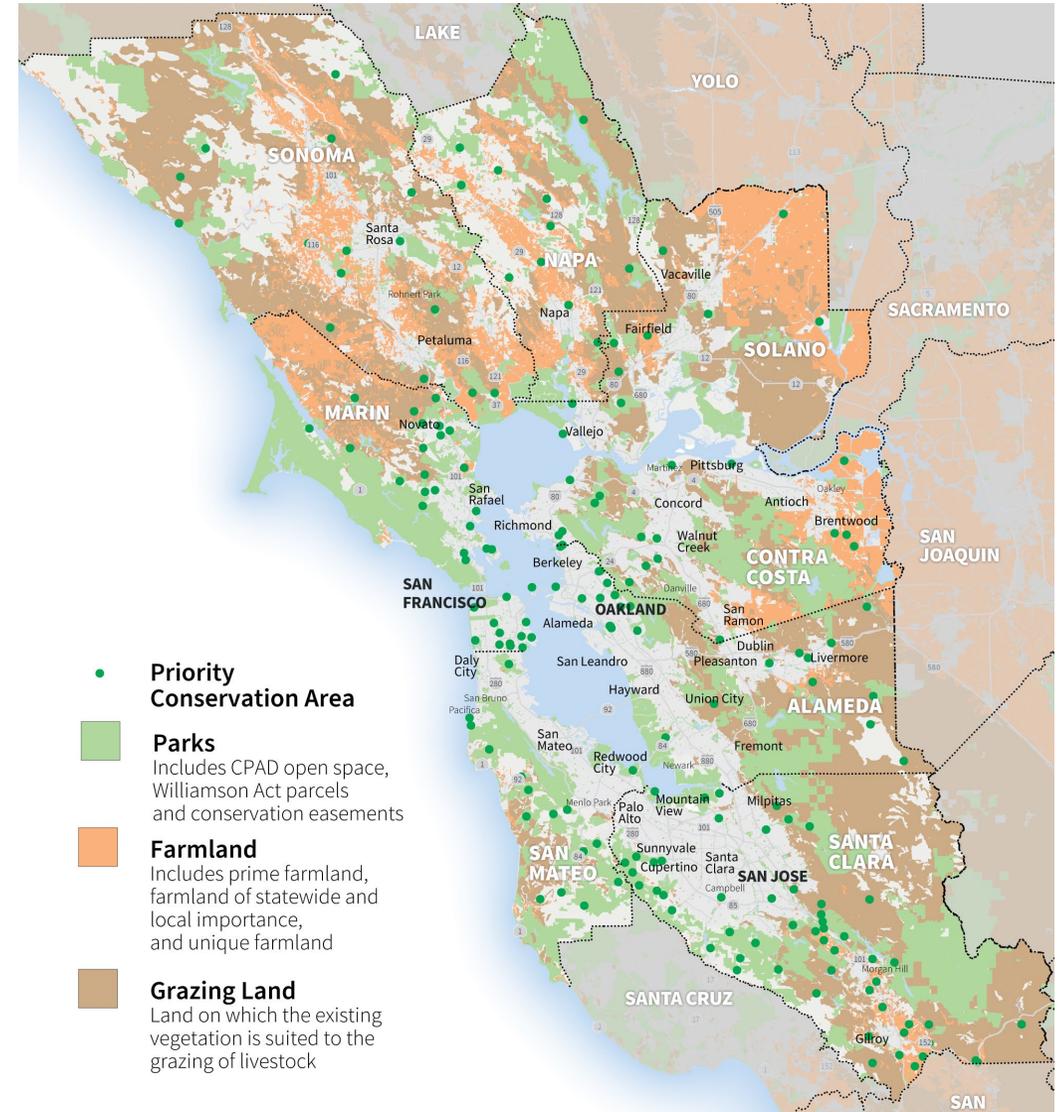


 <b>STRATEGY EN1</b> SEA LEVEL RISE ADAPTATION	 <b>STRATEGY EN4</b> URBAN GROWTH BOUNDARIES	 <b>STRATEGY EN5</b> CONSERVATION LANDS	 <b>STRATEGY EN6</b> PARKS AND RECREATION
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# ABAG PCA Designations

Currently, there are **185 designated PCAs**, representing approximately **2.3 million acres**

- **2007** - The PCA planning framework established for designating areas of regional significance that have **broad community support and an urgent need for protection**
- **2014** - Framework update established four primary designation types: **natural landscapes, agricultural lands, urban greening, and regional recreation**
- **2022 - PCA Refresh (in progress)** is developing updates to the planning framework and designation process to advance the use of **data** and the integration of **equity and resilience**



# Past PCA Funded Projects

- Co-managed by MTC and the State Coastal Conservancy
- Eligible project types:
  - Protection of natural resource, open space, or agricultural lands
  - Habitat restoration or enhancements
  - Bicycle and pedestrian access improvements
  - Urban greening
  - Planning activities
- Two separately managed programs:
  - North Bay (CTAs)
  - Rest of Bay (MTC/SCC)
- Refer to Appendix B for all funded projects



Milagra Battery Trail  
Image Source: Vivien Kim Thorp, Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy



900 Innes Park Planning  
Image Source: San Francisco Recreation and Parks

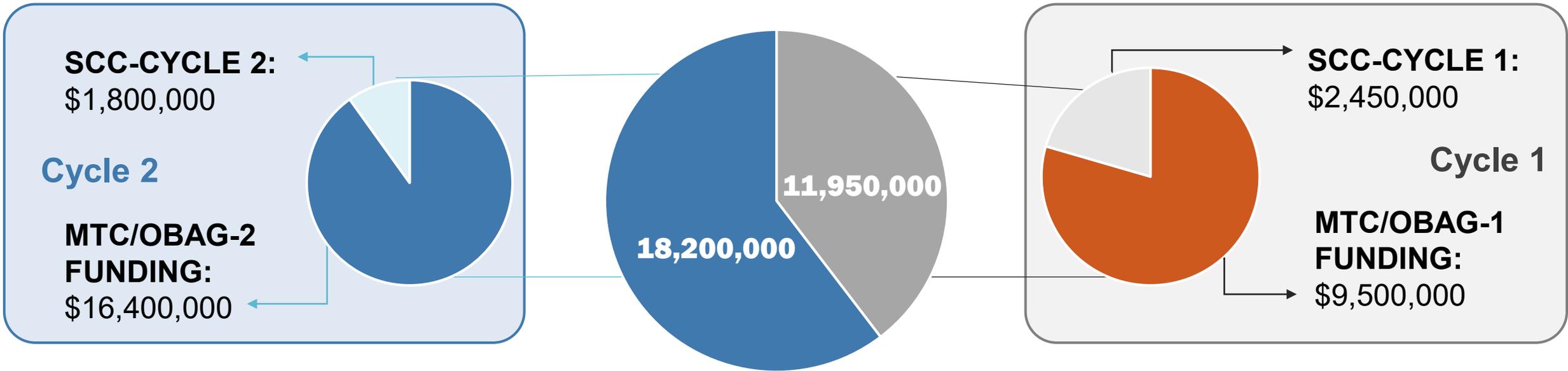


Pinole Shores to Bayfront Park  
Image Source: Karin Betts



Dotson Family Marsh  
Image Source: East Bay Regional Parks District

# OBAG 1 & 2 PCA Grant Funding



■ OBAG1 Total ■ OBAG2 Total

❑ Total MTC funding: \$25,900,000

❑ Total State Coastal Conservancy (SCC) funding: \$4,250,000

❑ PCAs awarded funds (across both cycles): \$30,150,000

- 32 distinct PCAs, or 16% of the total, received PCA grant funding in support of 58 projects
- Primary project types funded include: access and/or trail improvements (72%); planning (12%); acquisition (9%); restoration (3%); rehabilitation (2%); urban greening (2%)

# Preview: Requested Action & Path Forward

**Today:**  
Authorize Staff to Release OBAG 3 - Phase 1 Call



\*\$18M approved by Commission in Reso. 4505

**2024:** Approve awards



# What's New

## 1) Regional Call:

- MTC will select projects for funding in consultation with CTAs, SCC, & other partners
- Call for Projects will be for all nine counties

## 2) Available Local Funds:

- Ability to support broader suite of regional conservation priorities

## 3) PCA Refresh Data:

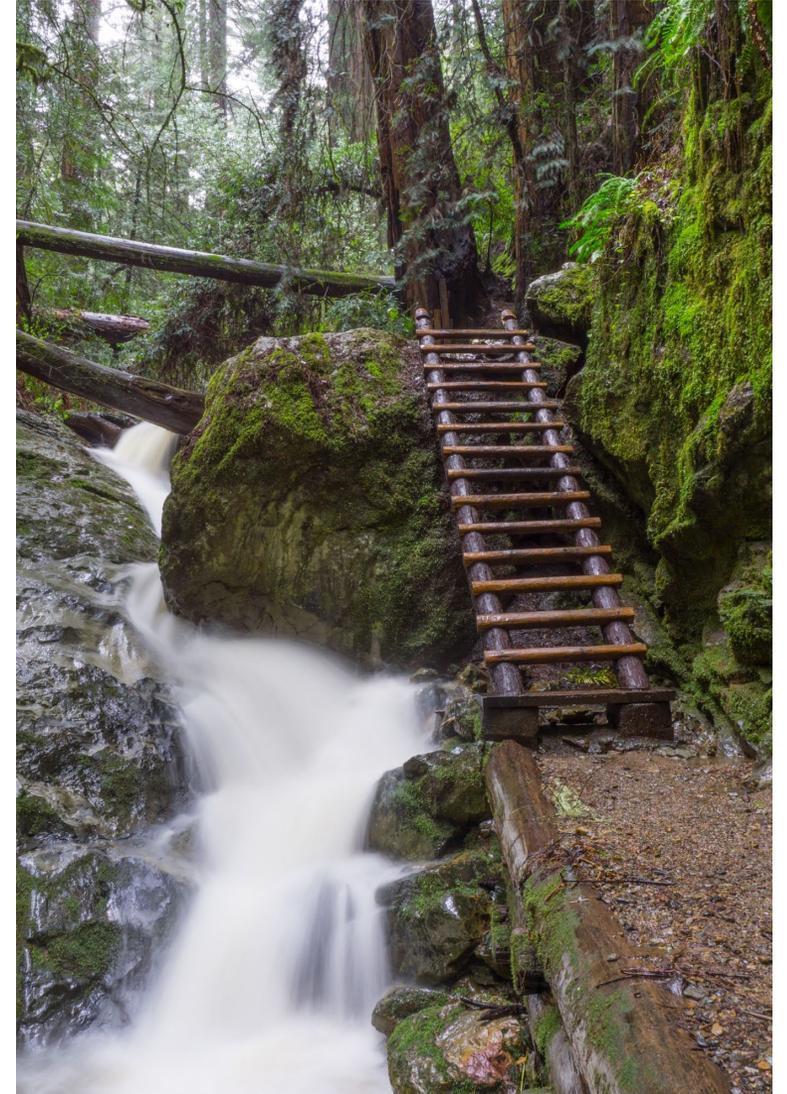
- Opportunities to further incorporate data, equity, and resilience



# OBAG 3 PCA Grants

## Proposed Two Phase Approach

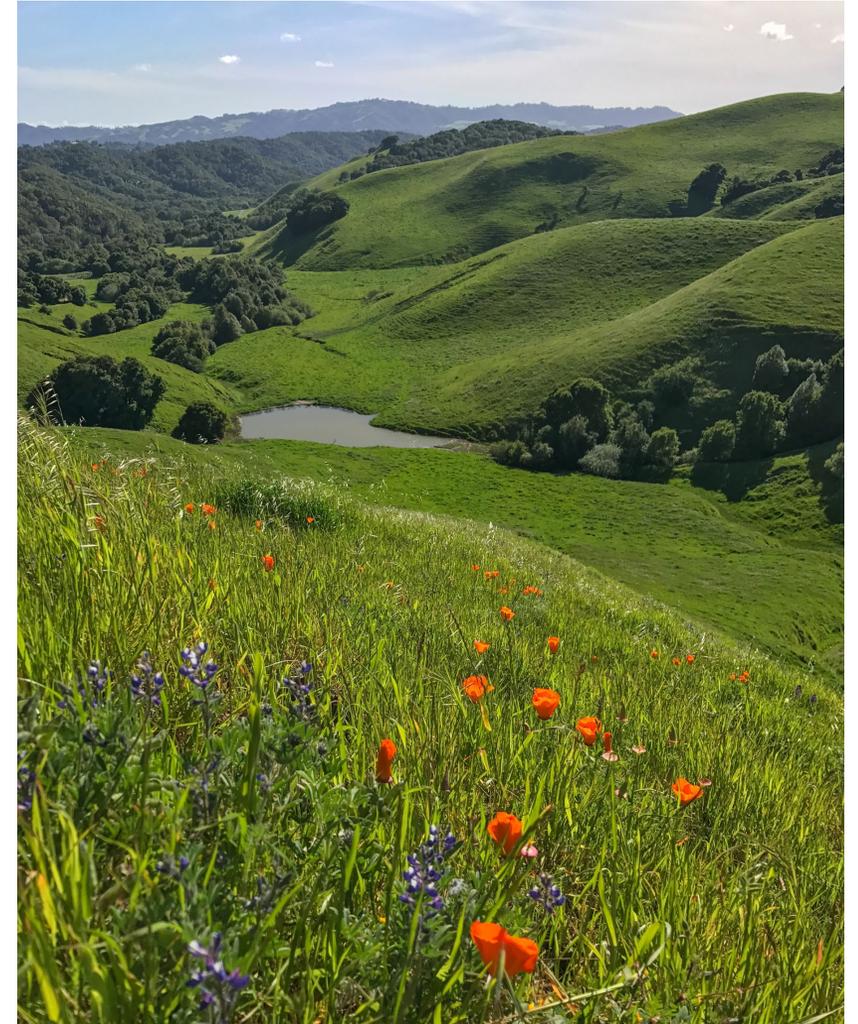
- **Phase 1 – \$8.5M (Spring 2024)**
  - Support near-term need for conservation project funding
  - Largely maintain 2019 PCA Grant Program Guidelines
  - Target 50+% of funding in North Bay counties
- **Phase 2 - \$8M (Spring 2025)**
  - Implement PCA Refresh framework
  - Seek SCC supplemental funding





# Priorities for Phase 1 PCA Grants

- 1) **Support PBA 50 implementation through protection, restoration, or enhancement of:**
  - Critical habitats
  - Ecosystems
  - Watersheds
  - Farmlands
  - Other agricultural lands
- 2) **Focus on magnitude of local and regional benefits:** equity, access, climate resilience





# Recommended Approach

Funding Round	Anticipated Funding*	Eligible Geographies	Focus
<b>Round 1</b> February 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$8.5 million total<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Target 50+% of funding in Marin, Napa, Solano &amp; Sonoma counties</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Existing PCAs</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Target \$6 million (70%) for ag/habitat protection, enhancement, &amp; restoration projects</li><li>• Equity, access, and climate resilience</li></ul>
<b>Round 2</b> Spring 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$8+ million total</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• New, updated, and existing PCAs</li><li>• PCA planning</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Implement PCA Refresh framework and priorities</li><li>• Support General Plan Open Space Element updates (SB1425)</li></ul>

*\*Maximum award for both rounds: \$1M*





# Next Steps

- **December-January:** Outreach to CTAs, SCC, and local staff; complete PCA Refresh
- **February-March 2024:** Release Round 1 Call for Projects
- **Summer 2024:** Award Round 1 grants; PCA Refresh implementation
- **Fall/Winter 2024:** Request authorization to release Round 2
- **Winter/Spring 2025:** Release Round 2 Call for Projects
- **Spring/Summer 2025:** Award Round 2 grants

## Requested Action:

Authorize staff to release a Call for Projects for \$8.5 million in OBAG 3 funding for Phase 1 PCA Grants

