

**2026 Priority Conservation Area (PCA) Grant Program
Award Recommendations and Project Descriptions**

The PCA Grant Program Grant Guidelines and Call for Proposals established grant eligibility, funding targets, and evaluation criteria and detailed a two-step application and evaluation process. Eligible applicants and project activities remained similar to prior PCA grant cycles. Consistent with the MTC Planning Committee guidance, funding targets were established based on project location (invest a minimum of 50 percent of funds in PCAs in Marin, Sonoma, Napa, and Solano counties and fund a minimum of one project per county), project type (to fund a mix of eligible project activities) and project purpose.

Based on the evaluation of the applications, staff are recommending approval of \$8 million in PCA grants for the following projects (Table 1).

Table 1. Recommended PCA Grant Program Project Awards

#	Applicant	Project Name	Project County	Proposed Award
1	City of Alameda	Wooden Bridge Replacement Feasibility Study	Alameda	\$ 500,000
2	Oakland Parks and Recreation Foundation	Restoring Connections: Deep East Oakland Community Stewardship, Creeks, & Shoreline Access	Alameda	\$ 450,000
3	City of San Pablo	McNeil Park	Contra Costa	\$ 500,000
4	City of San Rafael	Canal Boatyard Urban Park Connection	Marin	\$ 800,000
5	Napa County Resource Conservation District	Resilient Suscol Creek: Climate-Ready Habitat Planning	Napa	\$ 440,000

#	Applicant	Project Name	Project County	Proposed Award
6	San Francisco Recreation & Park Department	Twin Peaks Promenade – Bay Area Ridge Trail Connection & Habitat Restoration	San Francisco	\$ 500,000
7	Grassroots Ecology	Fire & Flora: Resilient Foothills Initiative	San Mateo	\$ 210,000
8	San Mateo County Transportation Authority (SMCTA)	Bay Trail SFO Gap Closure Project – Phase 1 (PE & Environmental)	San Mateo	\$ 600,000
9	Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District	Highway 17 Wildlife & Ridge Trail Crossings and Connections	Santa Clara	\$ 750,000
10	Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST)	North Coyote Valley Wildlife & Trails Study	Santa Clara	\$ 250,000
11	UC Cooperative Extension, Santa Clara County	Santa Clara Valley Agricultural Outreach & Awareness Campaign	Santa Clara	\$ 200,000
12	Solano County, Department of Resource Management	Farm to Market Phase 4	Solano	\$ 800,000
13	Western Rivers Conservancy (with Kashia Band of Pomo Indians)	South Fork Gualala River Acquisition	Sonoma	\$ 750,000
14	Petaluma River Park Foundation	Petaluma River Park	Sonoma	\$ 550,000
15	Sonoma Land Trust	Osprey Hill Ranch	Sonoma	\$ 450,000
16	City of Sonoma (with Sonoma Ecology Center)	Improving Habitat Quality and Bike/Ped Connectivity on PCA Creeks in the City of Sonoma	Sonoma	\$ 250,000
	TOTAL			\$8,000,000

- 1. City of Alameda, Wooden Bridge Replacement Feasibility Study (\$500,000)** – The Wooden Bridge connects Alameda Island to Bay Farm Island and is expected to be non-functional due to age, sea level rise and storm surge within ten years. This segment of San Francisco Bay Trail serves over 1,000 bicyclists and pedestrians daily and is heavily used by middle and high school students traveling to/from schools on the Alameda main island. PCA grant funds will include community engagement to develop a holistic design concept for a preferred alternative that will make it possible to seek further funding to finish construction within a ten-year timeframe, which is the predicted end-of-life for the Wooden Bridge.
- 2. Oakland Parks and Recreation Foundation, Restoring Connections: Deep East Oakland Community Stewardship, Creeks, & Shoreline Access (\$450,000)** – This multifaceted approach to community-driven environmental stewardship incorporates student experiential training and neighborhood-based conversations to develop a plan that optimizes access to the shoreline and natural resources in an urban setting. The planning and implementation of outdoor learning spaces within the watershed will provide skills and a sense of environmental allyship in students that will create opportunities for environmental career paths. This collaborative effort between neighborhood organizations and educational institutions will spearhead urban conservation efforts powered by local communities.
- 3. City of San Pablo, McNeil Park (\$500,000)** – The McNeil Park Project will convert a 4.86-acre vacant elementary school site into a vibrant community park that provides outdoor recreation to individuals of all age and abilities. The proposed age-specific playgrounds, artificial turf soccer fields, basketball courts, and senior rated fitness equipment support resident health and fitness while the amphitheater, open lawn, and picnic areas will provide a space for community events. The final design will include essential infrastructure such as restrooms and water fountains, trash receptacles, lighting and cameras, benches, parking, and bicycle racks as well as bilingual signage to promote sense of belonging among various communities. Additionally, the landscaping goals promote environmental sustainability through the preservation of existing trees and the reduction of urban heat island effects.
- 4. City of San Rafael, Canal Boatyard Urban Park Connection (\$800,000)** - The Canal neighborhood in the City of San Rafael currently has a deficit of parks and recreation opportunities. This project will develop a design for a shoreline urban park at 620 Canal

Street as well as a pedestrian bridge across the canal to increase park access. The planning process will prioritize community input to understand desired recreational opportunities. Additionally, infrastructure and landscaping designs will support climate resilience and urban greening efforts. This project will develop a plan that ultimately enhances health, climate resilience, and access to nature in an Equity Priority Community.

- 5. Napa County Resource Conservation District, Resilient Suscol Creek: Climate-Ready Habitat Planning (\$440,000)** – Lower Suscol Creek on the East Side of Napa Valley is vulnerable to future climate conditions due to historical alterations to the wetland. This project aims to develop a conceptual restoration design to 10 percent readiness that will improve the climate resilience and ecological function of approximately 100 acres of wetland, riparian, and floodplain habitat. Existing data will be used to assist in developing plans to reconnect floodplains, expand wetlands, and enhance aquatic connectivity to support sensitive species. Hydrologic and hydraulic modeling of future sea level rise and flood behavior will also help to inform the feasibility of certain restoration efforts under future climate conditions. Plans will be developed with input from the Suscol Intertribal Council, the Mishewal Wappo Tribe, and the Napa Valley Vine Trail Coalition.
- 6. San Francisco Recreation & Park Department, Twin Peaks Promenade – Bay Area Ridge Trail Connection & Habitat Restoration (\$500,000)** – This project aims to enhance the 1/3-mile section of Twin Peaks Boulevard that was closed to private vehicles in 2020. This shovel-ready project will transform the closed roadway into a universally accessible multi-use trail that combines recreational usage with habitat restoration. The project site will provide a safe connection to the Bay Area Ridge Trail as well as the Creeks-to-Peaks Trail. Visitors will have access to seating with scenic overlooks, skateboard elements, ADA-accessible parking, and bicycle racks. The natural landscape of the promenade will be enhanced through partial asphalt removal, native planting, and erosion control. Additionally, the native habitat of the federally endangered Mission Blue Butterfly will be protected by the decommissioning of trails that currently cut through sensitive habitat, the installation of split-rail fencing, and informational signage to help visitors understand the significance of these natural habitats.

7. **Grassroots Ecology, Fire & Flora: Resilient Foothills Initiative (\$210,000)** – As the risk of wildfire increases, fuel load reduction and the preservation of native plants helps to promote habitat resilience. This project focuses on wildfire mitigation and the enhancement of native plant populations across the Pearson-Arastradero & Foothills Nature Preserve in Palo Alto and Huddart & Wunderlich County Parks in Woodside to protect these habitats from future climate conditions. These habitat restoration goals will utilize community recruitment and training on fuel load reduction techniques as well as native plant propagation and identification skills. Collaboration with San Jose Conservation Corps, AmeriCorps, interns, and volunteers will foster workforce training that combines wildfire management and the protection of native plant species.
8. **San Mateo County Transportation Authority (SMCTA), Bay Trail SFO Gap Closure Project – Phase 1 (PE & Environmental) (\$600,000)** – The closure of a long standing gap in the Bay Trail adjacent to the San Francisco International Airport would aid the region in achieving a decades-long goal of a continuous 500 mile trail surrounding the San Francisco and San Pablo bays. This project plans to establish a 2.5-mile Class 1 multi-use corridor between San Bruno Avenue and Millbrae Avenue that allows for safe connections to regional trails and transit centers. Preliminary engineering and environmental studies will help to advance Phase 1 of this gap closure. Extensive community outreach and planned stakeholder engagement will ensure the interests of both the public and project partners are taken into consideration.
9. **Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, Highway 17 Wildlife & Ridge Trail Crossings and Connections (\$750,000)** – Highway 17 divides more than 30,000 acres of protected habitat and creates a gap in the 550-mile Bay Area Ridge Trail. This fragmentation of surrounding habitat separates wildlife populations leading to genetic isolation in already threatened species such as mountain lions as well as increased wildlife-vehicle collisions. This project will construct a wildlife undercrossing that provides safe passage between habitats. In addition to reconnecting wildlife populations, the construction of an overcrossing will provide a connection for pedestrians, cyclists, and equestrians to safely connect trails on either side of the highway. The construction of 2.1 miles of the new Spooky Knoll trail will also aid in the closure of a 7.1-mile gap in the Ridge Trail.

10. Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST), North Coyote Valley Wildlife & Trails Study

(\$250,000) – Coyote Valley provides regional connectivity between the Santa Cruz Mountains and the Diablo Range to a diverse community of wildlife. It also has the potential to connect regionally significant recreational trails. The North Coyote Valley Wildlife and Trails Study aims to identify a recreational trails system within Coyote Valley that balances public access with wildlife biodiversity and habitat connectivity. A review of existing information in combination with surveys and site visits will inform a summary of potential regional trail corridors that minimize conflict with wildlife populations in Coyote Valley. Additionally, the project will develop best management practices that could be relevant to similar efforts in the future.

11. UC Cooperative Extension, Santa Clara County, Santa Clara Valley Agricultural

Outreach & Awareness Campaign (\$200,000) – A connection between agriculture and local communities allows for long-lasting and effective protection of agricultural lands. This project will focus on community education and outreach as the primary tool to reduce the loss of agricultural operations. By providing widely accessible video storytelling of local farmers and ranchers, digital farm tours, printed and online promotional messaging, in-person farm-to-table events, and agricultural curriculum in local schools, this project can optimize public support for the protection and conservation of agricultural lands in Santa Clara Valley and beyond.

12. Solano County, Department of Resource Management, Farm to Market Phase 4

(\$800,000) – Safe and accessible multi-modal transportation between urban centers and agricultural operations increases connections and support for local farms. This project focuses on encouraging communities to purchase and consume locally farmed produce by providing sidewalks and Class II bike lanes for pedestrians and cyclists to safely reach local farms. Improvements to electrical vehicle charging stations and the installation of a new transit facilities would promote sustainable forms of transportation to and from agricultural operations as well.

13. Western Rivers Conservancy (with Kashia Band of Pomo Indians), South Fork Gualala

River Acquisition (\$750,000) – PCA funding would support acquisition of 298 acres along the South Fork Gualala River by the Western Rivers Conservancy and the Kashia Band of

Pomo Indians. Acquisition will prevent development and timber harvest on this culturally rich site, protecting 1.3-miles of the South Fork Gualala River and mature coastal redwood forest. This acquisition will allow for habitat restoration, cultural practices, and for tribal youth of the Kashia Band of Pomo Indians to reconnect with their ancestral lands.

14. Petaluma River Park Foundation, Petaluma River Park (\$550,000) – This project will support the final design and construction of a new park on the Petaluma River. Primary habitat restoration goals focus on the tidal marshland and the vernal pool present on site. The propagation of native plants and bank stabilization will also enhance the natural landscape of the park. Recreational opportunities in the park will include a gravel beach that offers kayak access to the Petaluma River as well as connections to Petaluma River trail.

15. Sonoma Land Trust, Osprey Hill Ranch (\$450,000) – The Osprey Hill Ranch is a 365-acre coastal ranch recently acquired by the Sonoma Land Trust with coastal grasslands, freshwater marshes, forests, and riparian habitats. PCA funding will support planning and design for a trail network on Osprey Hill Ranch while protecting natural and cultural resources. The trail network will include connections to the California Coastal Trail, as well as coastal access to Gleason Overlook and Rock Point Beach and trail connectivity to Wright Hill Regional Park and Open Space Preserve.

16. City of Sonoma (with Sonoma Ecology Center), Improving Habitat Quality and Bike/Ped Connectivity on PCA Creeks in the City of Sonoma (\$250,000) – This project will improve transportation infrastructure on regional trails for bicyclists and pedestrian safety. It also plans to enhance ecosystem function and habitat resilience of Sonoma, Fryer, and Nathanson creeks through weed control and vegetation management, native plant propagation, erosion repairs, and removal of garbage and debris from streams. Community engagement will be achieved through educational outreach events to raise awareness around native plant propagation, the effects of pesticide usage, and environmental stewardship.

Non-Award Recommendations

This round of PCA funding was highly competitive, with 53 letters of interest submitted requesting nearly \$36 million in funding. Based on the evaluation of letters of interest and/or applications, staff are recommending non-award to the following projects (Table 2). Non-

awarded projects are eligible to reapply for funding in the next PCA Grant round. Staff is available to assist applicants with developing more competitive proposals in future rounds.

Table 2. PCA Grant Program Applications Not Recommended for Awards

County	Applicant	Project Title	Requested Funds
Alameda	East Bay Regional Park District	Hayward Marsh Improvements – Phase I Construction	\$ 1,000,000
Alameda	City of Oakland Department of Transportation	Kennedy Street Bay Trail Gap Closure	\$ 670,000
Alameda	Alameda County Resource Conservation District	Helping Protect Sunol & Downstream Communities through Arroyo de la Laguna Vegetation Management	\$ 750,000
Alameda	City of Albany	Albany Hill Forest Resilience and Habitat Restoration	\$ 240,000
Alameda	Tri-Valley Conservancy	Altamont Hills Property Acquisition	\$ 376,500
Alameda	La Familia Counseling	Improving Parks in Unincorporated Alameda County	\$ 717,450
Alameda	City of Oakland, DOT	Hegenberger Road Complete Streets Plan	\$ 700,000
Contra Costa	East Bay Regional Park District	Public Access at Thurgood Marshall Regional Park	\$ 1,000,000
Contra Costa	East Bay Regional Park District	Former Roddy Ranch Restoration & Public Access Improvements	\$ 1,000,000
Contra Costa	East Bay Regional Park District	Keller Beach Improvements Project	\$ 1,000,000
Contra Costa	East Bay Regional Park District	Bay Trail Gap Closure – Planning and Design (Richmond)	\$ 1,000,000
Contra Costa	Contra Costa Resource Conservation District	Conserving Rangeland through Enhanced Management and Planning	\$ 560,378
Contra Costa	City of Richmond	Carlson Boulevard Multimodal Safety & Access Improvements – Phase III	\$ 1,000,000
Contra Costa	City of El Cerrito	Hillside Natural Area Fuels Management & Restoration	\$ 897,000
Contra Costa	East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy	Vasco Road Wildlife Connectivity Improvement Project	\$ 240,000
Contra Costa	John Muir Land Trust	Fernandez Ranch ADA Expansion Project	\$ 600,000
Marin	City of Larkspur	Redwood Highway Westside AT & Bay Trail Gap Closure	\$ 500,000

County	Applicant	Project Title	Requested Funds
Marin	Marin Audubon Society	Tiscornia Tidal Marsh Restoration & Sea Level Rise Adaptation	\$ 1,000,000
Marin	Town of Fairfax (with Fairfax Open Space Committee)	Wall Property Trails Rehabilitation & Wayfinding/Stewardship Amenities	\$ 200,000
Marin	Town of San Anselmo Public Works Department	Sorich Park & Faude Park Restoration and Improvement	\$ 270,000
Napa	Land Trust of Napa County	Godward Wetland Preserve (Calistoga) – Acquisition	\$ 800,000
San Francisco	Livable City	Twin Peaks Bioregion/Laguna Honda Hospital Tree, Habitat and Trail Assessment & Improvements	\$ 266,000
San Francisco	Port of San Francisco	Warm Water Cove Park Improvements (Southern Waterfront Beautification)	\$ 500,000
San Mateo	City of Redwood City	Redwood Shores Sea Level Rise Protection Project	\$ 1,000,000
San Mateo	Pacifica Land Trust	Pedro Point Headlands Trail Improvements	\$ 495,000
San Mateo	City of Brisbane	Quarry Road Recreational Trail Rehabilitation & Habitat Restoration	\$ 710,875
San Mateo	The SPHERE Institute	Bay Rise Park – Habitat Restoration, Bay Trail Upgrade & SLR Protection	\$ 1,000,000
San Mateo	City of Redwood City	Waterfront Park	\$ 1,000,000
Santa Clara	Fattoria Community Foundation	Fattoria Public Market & Food Hub – Agricultural Infrastructure Planning	\$ 495,000
Santa Clara	Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority	Coyote Valley Prime Farmland Protection Project	\$ 530,000
Santa Clara	Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department	Cottle & Lester Historic Ranch Site Plan Implementation – Phase 2	\$ 1,000,000
Santa Clara	Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department	Fortini Site Plan Phase I – Core Project Design and Partial Implementation	\$ 1,000,000
Sonoma	City of Cotati	Laguna de Santa Rosa Trail Gap Closure	\$ 401,000
Sonoma	City of Cotati	Veronda Falletti Ranch	\$ 763,500
Sonoma	City of Petaluma	Climate-Adaptive Safe Routes to School (SRTS) – St. Francis Drive Greenway	\$ 1,000,000
Sonoma	Zero Foodprint	Restore California – Working Lands Carbon Sequestration (Bay Area PCAs)	\$ 500,000

PCA Grant Program Background:

The PCA Grant Program – funded through the One Bay Area Grant (OBAG) program – was initiated by MTC in collaboration with the State Coastal Conservancy (SCC) in 2013 to provide funding to cities, counties, park districts, utility districts and other agencies and non-profits to acquire, enhance, or improve designated PCAs. Since the PCA Grant Program’s inception, MTC and the SCC have jointly disbursed over \$38 million in three prior rounds to support 71 projects in designated PCAs across the nine Bay Area counties (Table 3).

Table 3. Prior and Proposed PCA Grant Awards by County

County	Round 1 (2015)	Round 2 (2019)	Round 3 (2024)	TOTAL	Round 4 (2026)	TOTAL (Prior + Proposed)
Alameda	\$1,750,000	\$1,021,000	\$1,000,000	\$3,771,000	\$950,000	\$4,721,000
Contra Costa	\$1,219,711	\$2,950,000	\$280,000	\$4,449,711	\$500,000	\$4,949,711
Marin	\$1,250,000	\$2,050,000	\$670,000	\$3,970,000	\$800,000	\$4,770,000
Napa	\$1,250,000	\$2,050,000	\$1,750,000	\$5,050,000	\$440,000	\$5,490,000
San Francisco	\$1,667,589	\$1,694,000	\$750,000	\$4,111,589	\$500,000	\$4,611,589
San Mateo	\$1,600,000	\$1,552,000	\$0	\$3,152,000	\$810,000	\$3,962,000
Santa Clara	\$712,700	\$2,253,000	\$2,000,000	\$4,965,700	\$1,200,000	\$6,165,700
Solano	\$1,250,000	\$2,050,000	\$750,000	\$4,050,000	\$800,000	\$4,850,000
Sonoma	\$1,250,000	\$2,050,000	\$1,300,000	\$4,600,000	\$2,000,000	\$6,600,000
Regional	\$0	\$530,000	\$0	\$530,000	\$0	\$530,000
	\$11,950,000	\$17,179,000	\$8,500,000	\$38,650,000	\$8,000,000	\$46,650,000