Date: November 25, 2013

To: Executive Board

From: Miriam Chion
Planning and Research Director

Subject: **Priority Conservation Area (PCA) Applications Associated with OBAG PCA Grant Process**

Executive Summary

As part of the One Bay Area Grant (OBAG) Priority Conservation Area (PCA) grant program, three applications were submitted for new PCAs. These applications accompanied funding proposals for conservation projects within areas not yet designated as PCAs but consistent with the PCA guidelines adopted by the Executive Board. Staff reviewed the PCA applications and recommends that the Executive Board adopt them. Full applications are attached. Other than applications received through requests for PCA grant funding, the PCA application process is not currently open.

The ABAG Regional Planning Committee may take action on this item in advance of the Executive Board meeting. Staff will update Executive Board members of any actions taken prior to its meeting on December 5.

Background

In May 2013 the State Coastal Conservancy (SCC) in cooperation with Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) issued a call for proposals focused on the Priority Conservation Areas (PCAs). As part of the One Bay Area Grant (OBAG) program, $5 million of federal transportation funding was made available from MTC for this program. In addition, SCC contributed $2.5 million in state resource bond funds to augment the program and match the federal funds. Projects were required to be located in the counties of Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, San Mateo or Santa Clara. Multi-county projects were allowed and encouraged. This program complements a PCA program focused on the four North Bay Counties, which is discussed below.

Eligible projects were required to meet screening criteria, address the goals of the PCA program and consist of the following activities: planning; pedestrian and bicycle facilities/infrastructure; visual enhancement; habitat/environmental enhancements; and protection or enhancement of natural resources, open space or agricultural lands. Eligible projects were also required to be in or connect to at least one designated PCA. If the project did not connect to a PCA, the applicant was required to file an application with ABAG requesting PCA designation, if invited to submit a full proposal. Applications

for PCA designation were required to meet the PCA criteria established in 2007 and used to review all previous PCA applications. Full grant proposals were due on November 15, 2013 and decisions will be made about grant awards by December 20, 2013.

In addition to the regional program, OBAG allocated $5 million for PCA projects in the North Bay Counties. These funds were evenly distributed between the Congestion Management Agencies (CMAs) of Marin, Sonoma, Solano and Napa. Each CMA developed its own guidelines for distributing the funds—including whether or not projects must be within an existing PCA or an area consistent with regional PCA program criteria. Among the four CMAs, the Solano Transportation Authority (STA) requested that applicants submit a PCA application to ABAG for projects consistent with its program guidelines but currently outside of a PCA.

Proposed New Priority Conservation Areas (PCAs)

This section summarizes requests for new PCA designations during the OBAG PCA program process. Full applications are included as an appendix to this memo.

Regional PCA Program

Two projects submitted for funding through the regional program met the program's goals but were not part of a designated PCA. Requests for PCA designation were received from these two proposed projects:

1. Project: **Pinole Creek Fish Passage Corridor**
   Applicant: Contra Costa Resource Conservation District

2. Project: **Office of Education Loma Mar Property**
   Applicant: San Mateo County Department of Parks

Staff reviewed the PCA applications associated with each project and found that they are consistent with regional PCA guidelines. (The projects within these potential PCAs are under consideration for grant funding. Consideration of PCA designation will occur regardless of the outcome of the grant award.)

Solano County Transportation Authority Program

One of the projects submitted for funding through the Solano Transportation Agency's PCA program was not in an area currently designated as a PCA, but consistent with the program's objectives. As part of its funding request to STA, the applicant—Solano County—submitted an application to ABAG for the following PCA designation:

Project: **Suisun Valley**
Applicant: Solano County

Staff reviewed the application submitted by Solano County and found that the Suisun Valley PCA is consistent with the regional PCA guidelines. (STA has selected a project within this proposed PCA for funding.)

Recommended Action

Staff respectfully requests that the Executive Board adopt the following proposed Priority Conservation Areas (PCAs): 1) Pinole Creek Fish Passage Corridor; 2) Office of Education Loma Mar Property; and 3) Suisun Valley

Attachments

1. Pinole Creek Fish Passage Corridor PCA Application
2. Office of Education Loma Mar Property PCA Application
3. Suisun Valley PCA Application

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Priority Conservation Area Designation
Nomination Form

Enter information in the spaces provided. E-mail this completed nomination form and attachments requested as part of this form to MarkS@abag.ca.gov. If e-mailing is not possible, a hard copy of materials can be mailed to Mark Shorett, Association of Bay Area Governments, P.O. Box 2050, Oakland, CA 94604-2050.

PART 1: AREA INFORMATION

Area Name	Pinole Creek Fish Passage Corridor
Area Location (city, town, county)	City of Pinole, Contra Costa County
Total Acreage	Approximately 5 acres

Attach a map showing the proposed area boundaries and location. Include other relevant information, such as topography or an aerial photograph, to show the context for protection of this area.

PART 2: NOMINEE CONTACT INFORMATION

Lead Nominating Agency/Organization	Contra Costa Resource Conservation District
Contact Person	Benjamin Wallace
Address	5552 Clayton Road, Concord, CA 94521
Phone Number(s)	925-672-6522
E-mail address	ben.wallace@ca.nacdnet.net
Partnering Agency(ies)/Organization(s)	Friends of Pinole Creek, Caltrans, City of Pinole, Contra Costa County Flood Control District, East Bay Municipal Utility District

PART 3: AREA CRITERIA

Provide a description of how the area meets each of the following criteria by addressing the points for each. Limit responses for each criterion to one page, which can be typed within this document or provided as separate attachments.

A. *Level of Consensus*

The Pinole Creek Fish Passage Corridor is a 320' dual box culvert and short stretch of flood control channel located on Pinole Creek at the crossing of Interstate Highway 80. Contra Costa Resource Conservation District is embarking on a project to enhance the area to improve passage for anadromous fish, primarily Steelhead, to upper Pinole Creek. The work involves retrofitting the culverts to make them more passable for fish.

There is broad support for this conservation initiative, including Friends of Pinole Creek, Caltrans, East Bay Municipal Utility District, City of Pinole, Contra Costa Flood Control and Water Conservation District, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and NOAA Fisheries.

Enhancement of this area will complement conservation projects underway at the mouth of Pinole Creek and enable anadromous fish to access quality spawning habitat on protected lands in the upper watershed.

Priority Conservation Area Designation
Nomination Form

B. Regional Significance

Fish passage enhancement in this PCA will improve access to 6.8 miles of documented quality steelhead spawning and rearing habitat on the main stem of Pinole Creek, as documented in the Upper Pinole Creek Salmonid Habitat Assessment (EBMUD, 2009) and Lower Pinole Creek Steelhead Habitat Assessment (Hagar Env. Science, 2009). The I-80 within this PCA present the only significant barrier to steelhead migration in Pinole Creek up to the natural falls (partial barrier) located on EBMUD protected lands, approximately 6.7 miles upstream.

Pinole Creek has regional significance as one of only a small handful of viable steelhead runs within San Francisco and San Pablo Bays. Pinole Creek is important to recovery of the Interior San Francisco Bay Diversity Strata of Central California Coast Steelhead as identified by NMFS. The project will contribute to the recovery of this diversity strata by improving access to quality habitat and by increasing genetic diversity and spatial distribution of the population. The project will also contribute to the fulfillment of the following local and regional plans:

- Pinole Creek Watershed Vision Plan, Urban Creeks Council.
- Central California Coast Steelhead Recovery Plan, NOAA.
- Low Effect East Bay Habitat Conservation Plan (2008). East Bay Municipal Utility District.
- CA State Coastal Conservancy, Strategic Plan, 2013-2018. Goal 5 (Enhance Coastal Watersheds), Objective 5E (Improve Fish Habitat).

C. Urgency

Steelhead passage issues were identified in Pinole Creek in 2002, and since then many efforts have been made to support habitat enhancement for this federally threatened species, including salmonid monitoring, habitat assessments, and restoration projects in the upper watershed to reduce sedimentation and improve in-stream habitat. Designation of this area is critical to focusing resources towards fish passage improvements while a strong and broad-based partnership exists, and cooperative efforts are underway to improve habitat.

CONTRA COSTA
RESOURCE
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

(925) 672-6522 | PHONE
(925) 672-8064 | FAX

5552 Clayton Road, Concord, CA 94521

RESOLUTION #2013-02

TO ENDORSE NOMINATION OF PINOLE CREEK *PRIORITY CONSERVATION AREA* AND SUPPORT PINOLE CREEK FISH PASSAGE GRANT PROPOSAL

Whereas, Pinole Creek contains suitable habitat for anadromous fish spawning and rearing provided adequate fish passage can be achieved below Interstate Highway 80;

Whereas, the Association of Bay Area Governments and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), with support from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) and the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC)—in partnership with congestion management agencies, transit providers, and local governments throughout the Bay Area, have formed the FOCUS program to coordinate conservation and development in the Bay Area;

Whereas, the FOCUS program accepts nominations for Priority Conservation Area designations, which, when so designated become eligible for certain financial incentives for conservation, including the Plan Bay Area Priority Conservation Area grant program;

Whereas, Contra Costa Resource Conservation District is presently working with Caltrans, Contra Costa Flood Control and Water Conservation District, the City of Pinole, Friends of Pinole Creek, East Bay Municipal Utility District, and other community partners to design and implement a project to improve upstream passage for threatened steelhead on Pinole Creek;

Whereas, Contra Costa Resource Conservation District has received generous contributions from Phillips 66, California Natural Resource Agency, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and California State Coastal Conservancy for the Pinole Creek Fish Passage project, and additional funding is required for project construction,

Now therefore, so be it resolved that the Board of Directors hereby:

1. Endorses the nomination of the Pinole Creek Fish Passage Corridor at Interstate Highway 80 as a Priority Conservation Area in the Association of Bay Area Governments' *Focus* program, and
2. Supports the Pinole Creek Fish Passage Grant proposal to the Plan Bay Area *Priority Conservation Area* grant program and agrees to implement the project was awarded.

Adopted by the Board of Directors on this 21st day of October, 2013, by a vote of:

Ayes:	*4*	*Skaredoff, Black, Bloomfield, Meadows*
Nays:	*0*	
Absent:	*1*	*Brumleve*

Attest: _____

Igor Skaredoff, President, Board of Directors

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Priority Conservation Area Designation
Nomination Form

PART 1: AREA INFORMATION

Area Name	Office of Education Loma Mar
Area Location (city, town, county)	Loma Mar, San Mateo County
Total Acreage	174

Attach a map showing the proposed area boundaries and location. Include other relevant information, such as topography or an aerial photograph, to show the context for protection of this area.

PART 2: NOMINEE CONTACT INFORMATION

Lead Nominating Agency/Organization	San Mateo County Department of Parks
Contact Person	Dave Holland, Assistant County Manager
Address	455 County Center, 4th Floor, Redwood City, CA 94063
Phone Number(s)	(650) 363-1999
E-mail address	dholland@smcgov.org
Partnering Agency(ies)/Organization(s)	Peninsula Open Space Trust

PART 3: AREA CRITERIA

A. *Level of Consensus*

The San Mateo County Department of Parks is currently in the process of applying for a PCA grant to protect this area, which is adjacent to a nearly 8,000-acre complex of County parkland and could form a vital addition to Memorial County Park. This project is also supported by the Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST), which is providing matching funds for the acquisition. For years, the Loma Mar property has been a top planning priority for POST, not only because of the essential connection it will provide to adjacent parkland, but also for the significant redwood forest on the property.

Approximately 59 acres of the property are designated by Bay Area Open Space Council Conservation Lands Network/Upland Habitat Goals as areas "Essential to the Conservation Goals" due to the presence of natural resources on portions of the property. It is also identified as a proposed trail corridor in the San Mateo County Trails Plan (2001). Lastly, The San Mateo County General Plan (1985) identifies Pescadero Road, which passes through the southern portion of the property, as a scenic corridor that offers many visual and recreational experiences. The Plan recognizes the importance of preserving these vital resources and protecting them from incompatible development, and also discusses the need for consistent temporary corridors buffering the roads to protect the views along these roads.

Priority Conservation Area Designation
Nomination Form

B. Regional Significance

Protection of the Office of Education Loma Mar area meets the goals of the PCA grant program by protecting and enhancing resources areas and habitats. This project would provide critical connections to a nearly 8,000-acre complex of County parkland in that area (which includes Memorial County Park, Sam McDonald County Park, Heritage Grove and Pescadero Creek County Park). It provides the opportunity to connect to existing trails in Memorial Park, as well as to formalize an extensive trail system on existing logging roads. In addition, the Office of Education Loma Mar area could serve as a link in a proposed trail from Memorial Park to Pescadero State Beach. Considering the shortage of group camping areas and group picnic areas among San Mateo County Parks, the property's proximity to Memorial Park makes it a possible choice for the construction of more county campgrounds.

Natural features include an intermittent stream that runs through the property that is a tributary to the ecologically rich Pescadero Creek, which supports a run of the federally threatened steelhead trout and could be restored to support the endangered Coho salmon. The property is comprised of second-growth redwood and Douglas fir forest, which provide an important buffer for the endangered marbled murrelet (found in Memorial Park).

C. Urgency

The sale of the property will be subject to Government Code provisions that provide that the land is offered first to any park and recreation district, to any regional park authority, and to the county within which the land is situated. If none of those options result in a sale, the property would then be offered for sale to the general public through a public bidding process. Therefore, it is ideal for San Mateo County Parks to purchase the property at this initial stage to avoid a public offering, which could result in a sale to a private individual with the power to develop or subdivide the property.

RESOLUTION NO. 072876

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, COUNTY OF SAN MATEO, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

* * * * * *

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE DESIGNATION OF THE 174-ACRE OFFICE OF EDUCATION LOMA MAR PROPERTY AS A PRIORITY CONSERVATION AREA BY THE ASSOCIATION OF BAY AREA GOVERNMENTS

RESOLVED, by the Board of Supervisors of the County of San Mateo, State of California, that

WHEREAS, San Mateo County considers improvements and expansions to its existing County Parks System on an ongoing basis; and

WHEREAS, the Office of Education Loma Mar property lies adjacent to Memorial County Park within the San Mateo County Park System; and

WHEREAS, San Mateo County Park System's future acquisition of the Office of Education Loma Mar property may be eligible for partial funding by the Plan Bay Area Priority Conservation Area (PCA) grant program; and

WHEREAS, such partial funding by the PCA grant program would require that the Association of Bay Area Governments, under Plan Bay Area, designate the area covered by the Office of Education Loma Mar property as a Priority Conservation Area; and

WHEREAS, support by this Board of Supervisors for such a designation is important to the designation process.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED that the County of San Mateo is in full support of the designation of the area covered by the Office of Education Loma Mar property as a Priority Conservation Area by the Association of Bay Area Governments.

* * * * * *

Regularly passed and adopted this 5th day of November 2013.

AYES and in favor of said resolution:

Supervisors: *DAVE PINE*

CAROLE GROOM

DON HORSLEY

WARREN SLOCUM

ADRIENNE J. TISSIER

NOES and against said resolution:

Supervisors: *NONE*

Absent Supervisors: *NONE*

President, Board of Supervisors
County of San Mateo
State of California

Certificate of Delivery

I certify that a copy of the original resolution filed in the Office of the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors of San Mateo County has been delivered to the President of the Board of Supervisors.

Rebecca Romero, Deputy
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

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FOCUS PROGRAM: Priority Conservation Area Designation Nomination Form

Enter information in the spaces provided. E-mail this completed nomination form and attachments requested as part of this form to FOCUS@abag.ca.gov. If e-mailing is not possible, a hard copy of materials can be mailed to Mark Shorett, Association of Bay Area Governments, P.O. Box 2050, Oakland, CA 94604-2050.

PART 1: AREA INFORMATION

Area Name	Suisun Valley Agricultural Region
Area Location (city, town, county)	Unincorporated Solano County; located north and west of the City of Fairfield, southeast of Napa County, and east of Green Valley
Total Acreage	Approximately 9,000 acres

Attach a map showing the proposed area boundaries and location. Include other relevant information, such as topography or an aerial photograph, to show the context for protection of this area.

PART 2: NOMINEE CONTACT INFORMATION

Lead Nominating Agency/Organization	Solano County
Contact Person	Matt Walsh
Address	675 Texas Street, Ste. 5500, Fairfield, CA 94533
Phone Number(s)	707-784-6765
E-mail address	mwalsh@solanocounty.com
Partnering Agency(ies)/Organization(s)	City of Fairfield; Solano Land Trust; Solano Transportation Agency

PART 3: AREA CRITERIA

Provide a description of how the area meets each of the following criteria by addressing the points for each. Limit responses for each criterion to one page, which can be typed within this document or provided as separate attachments.

A. *Level of Consensus*

- Describe the level of community support and/or political will for protection of this area, mentioning any existing plans that identify this area. Some examples of plans include an organization/agency's strategic plan, general plan, habitat conservation plan, etc.

The Suisun Valley Agricultural Region is one of 10 unique agricultural regions identified in the County's General Plan. It is surrounded by urban development on three sides and has been lauded as a rural retreat for city residents and visitors to the county. The Valley has excellent soil and climatic conditions that has kept this area in viable agriculture for over 100 years.

In 2007, a report "Agricultural Vision and Economic Innovation for Suisun Valley" was prepared. It contained a vision statement for the Valley, which was subsequently adopted by the Suisun Valley Fund Advisory Committee. It is now supported by the Suisun Valley Fruit Growers Association, Suisun Valley Vintners and Growers Association, Solano Irrigation District, City of Fairfield, Solano County Farm Bureau, City of Suisun City, Solano Land Trust, and the Solano County Agricultural Advisory Committee. The vision states:

> ***"Suisun Valley is a unique farming region that supports profitable family farms and quality of life for all its residents. It is a destination for tourists seeking world class wine, identifiable Suisun Valley farm products and a beautiful agricultural landscape with no***

fallow land. The Suisun Valley appellation is so famous that it creates new markets and increases demand for Suisun Valley wine and other farm products outside of the region."

With Solano County supporting this vision as well, the County's 2008 General Plan Update included priorities on which to focus, and directed the development of a Suisun Valley Strategic Plan (subsequently adopted on February 1, 2011). The Strategic Plan process asked the community and stakeholders to confirm those priorities from the General Plan. In doing so, they were placed in this order:

- **Maintain agricultural character**
- **Improve farm production and income**
- **Create agri-tourism serving centers**
- **Provide infrastructure to support expanded use of Suisun Valley**
- **Enable value-added agriculture**
- **Maintain flexibility for future enterprises**
- **Make unfarmable properties available for other uses**
- **Get better exposure from I-80**

- Describe how this area might promote collaboration between multiple organizations and/or jurisdictions.

The ongoing and future preservation of the Suisun Valley as an economically viable agricultural area has been of utmost importance to multiple local agencies and stakeholder groups:

Solano County
Solano County Farm Bureau
Solano County Agricultural Advisory Committee
Solano Land Trust
Solano County Fruit Growers Association
Solano County Vintners and Growers Association
City of Fairfield
City of Vallejo
City of Suisun City
Solano Irrigation District
Suisun Valley Fund

Each of these groups supported the development of the Suisun Valley Strategic Plan, which serves to preserve and enhance the economic viability of agricultural operations in the Suisun Valley. Continued implementation of the Plan will allow these organizations to further coordinate and cooperate on the shared vision for Suisun Valley.

FOCUS PROGRAM: Priority Conservation Area Designation Nomination Form

- Describe any work underway to protect this area and who is involved.

The Solano County General Plan Update in 2008 confirmed the importance of this region for the agricultural community, the local farming economy, and visitors to the area. The General Plan designated the Suisun Valley as one of ten unique agricultural areas in the county and was part of a special study area during the General Plan update process. The General Plan promotes the development of strategic action plans for each of the ten agricultural areas. For Suisun Valley, the GP also encourages the development of complimentary agri-tourism and value-added land uses. Immediately following the adoption of the General Plan, Solano County developed the Suisun Valley Strategic Plan, which was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on February 1, 2011. The Strategic Plan sets forth the following:

- **a description of land use, circulation and infrastructure needs**
- **methods to sustain and improve upon the agricultural economy**
- **provisions for zoning ordinance updates, unique to Suisun Valley**
- **description of funding options necessary to finance improvements**

Both the General Plan Update process and the development of the Strategic Plan included input from key stakeholders:
Solano County Farm Bureau
Solano County Agricultural Advisory Committee
Solano Land Trust
Solano County Fruit Growers Association
Solano County Vintners and Growers Association
City of Fairfield
City of Vallejo
City of Suisun City
Solano Irrigation District
Suisun Valley Fund

<u>Other Protective Measures</u>:
In addition to the General Plan policies and Strategic Plan for the Suisun Valley area, other tools are in place to help prevent the premature conversion of this important farmland.

<u>Zoning</u>: As an implementation measure for both the General Plan and the Strategic Plan, the entire Suisun Valley area has been rezoned to "A-SV-20" (Agriculture Suisun Valley) and "ATC" (Agricultural Tourist Center). These zoning districts are limited to the Suisun Valley area and provide established agricultural and agritourism land uses unique to Suisun Valley.

<u>Williamson Act</u>: Over half (4,700 acres) of the 9,000 acres of Suisun Valley participates in the Williamson Act program for land protection. The WA requires that land owners continue to maintain their property in commercial agriculture in exchange for a reduced property tax valuation. The WA is a revolving 10 year program, which automatically renews and extends every year.

<u>County Orderly Growth Initiative</u>: Solano County voters adopted Measure A in 1984, which was extended in 1994 and 2008 (Measure T) as the Orderly Growth Initiative (OGI). The OGI included policies, incorporated into the County General Plan, restricting the redesignation of lands designated Agriculture and Open Space in the General Plan. In November 2008, Measure T was approved by voters which readopted the OGI policies, further limiting the County's ability to change the designation of "Agriculture" or "Natural Resource" lands through December 2028. As such, any conversion to non-agricultural or non-natural resource use would require voter approval in a general election.

B. Regional Significance

- Describe how this area promotes regionally significant conservation values. Some examples of regionally significant conservation values that an area may provide include landscape/habitat linkages between large patches, unique landscapes/features, large important farmland areas, landscapes with significant water protection and enhancement opportunities, large patches of critical habitat, connections for people (ex. trails) and wildlife (ex. corridors) on a regional scale, buffers for waterways and/or other natural areas, separation of urbanized areas through open space networks, adds to regional parks/other large protected areas. The area may also provide a service that benefits public safety and/or the economic vitality of the region, such as agricultural land or tourism.

<u>Large Important Farmland Areas</u>: Suisun Valley is an approximately 9,000 acre agricultural valley, containing Class 1 soils and has a long history of agricultural production. Wine grapes, small grains, and fruit crops are the predominant crops. The area was designated an American Viticultural Area (AVA) in 1982.

<u>Connections for People</u>: Suisun Valley is primarily served by Suisun Valley Road, Abernathy Road, Rockville Road, and Mankas Road. Existing wineries, fruit stands, and limited commercial uses attract weekend visitors looking for low key activities in the area. These roads also serve as the primary routes for agricultural trucking to and from the area. With a key component of the Suisun Valley Strategic Plan focusing on infrastructure, it is important to ensure that these routes are maintained suitable for both the farming industry as well as visitors to the area. The area has also served as a desired route for bicyclists, and its rural aesthetic continues to draw increasing amounts of recreational cyclists.

<u>Economic Vitality of the Region, such as Agricultural Land or Tourism</u>: Both the General Plan and Strategic Plan envision Suisun Valley providing for greater flexibility in developing "value-added" agricultural lands uses and additional agritourism growth. Prior to 2008, the County's voter adopted Orderly Growth Initiative required that anything designated Agriculture in the General Plan was required to stay Agriculture. At the time, this policy placed severe restrictions on the ability of Suisun Valley to develop any kind of ancillary agricultural service uses or agritourism related land uses. As a result, the economic vitality of the Suisun Valley was severely limited, with the historic farming practices in danger of dying out. With the adoption of the 2008

General Plan and the Strategic Plan, the further development of agritourism uses became a priority. It was imperative that additional options be presented to farmers which would provide economic benefit and support the agricultural operations of the region.

Two related top priorities for the sustainability of the Suisun Valley are to improve agricultural production and income and to identify Agricultural Tourist Centers (ATC) within the valley. The Strategic Plan serves to reduce barriers that previously prevented farms from being profitable. The Plan also designated eight ATCs located within the valley. These ATCs are intended to support small tourist oriented centers that attract tourists and provide additional opportunities to market local products. The designated ATCs are located throughout the Suisun Valley Region, primarily in areas that already contain pre-existing small amounts of commercial development (wineries, tasting rooms, cafes, etc.).

Separation of Urbanized Areas: The Suisun Valley area provides a unique geographical agricultural separator. It is bound by urban areas of the City of Fairfield to the east, south, and to a lesser extent the west. Maintaining this area in viable agricultural production will ensure that it does not receive future pressure to develop as 20 acre estates with little to no agricultural use.

C. Urgency

- Describe the existing or potential threats to the ecological integrity of this area or to the efforts to protect this area.

If the goals set forth in the General Plan and Strategic Plan for this area are not realized, Suisun Valley's economy may continue to trend downward. This could force farming operations to cease, likely prompting additional 20 acre estates to develop with little to no agricultural activity. To promote the implementation of the Strategic Plan, sources of funding must be pursued. Funding can assist with necessary infrastructure improvements such as visitor access, agricultural trucking access, and more user friendly bicycle routes. These routes will provide access to neighborhood agricultural sites resulting in reduced vehicle miles traveled and an overall reduction in green house gas emissions.

Funding is also envisioned relating to the purchase of Agricultural Easements or land for permanent preservation of farmland. This process would be negotiated between a willing property owner and likely a non-profit agency, such as the Solano Land Trust. Designating the Suisun Valley as a Priority Conservation Area (PCA) will assist with future funding requests necessary to assist with both the direct preservation of agricultural land through purchases and by assisting with the infrastructure improvements to help make this area a sustainable and economically viable agricultural region pursuant to the vision of the General Plan and Suisun Valley Strategic Plan.

FOCUS PROGRAM: Priority Conservation Area Designation Nomination Form

- Describe any existing or potential opportunities for the protection or restoration of this area and how ready the process is to proceed.

  Immediate plans include submitting an OBAG (One Bay Area Grant) application (from the North Bay Pilot Program pool of funds) for funding to assist with the development of the vehicular and bicycle and pedestrian path infrastructure identified in the Suisun Valley Strategic Plan. The improved access will further enhance the viability and sustainability of the agriculture and help to stimulate agri-tourism in the area.

RESOLUTION NO. 2013-17

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF AN APPLICATION TO THE ASSOCIATION OF BAY AREA GOVERNMENTS FOR THE DESIGNATION OF SUISUN VALLEY AS A REGIONAL PRIORITY CONSERVATION AREA

WHEREAS, a Priority Conservation Area (PCA) is an area of regional significance that has broad community support and an urgent need for protection; and

WHEREAS, in 2007, the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) designated five PCA's in Solano County and is now accepting new PCA designation applications; and

WHEREAS, the Suisun Valley Strategic Plan, approved by the Board of Supervisors on February 1, 2011, encompasses approximately 9,000 acres with the majority in agricultural use, and recognizes Suisun Valley as a unique farming region that supports profitable family farms and quality of life for residents, a destination for tourists seeking world class wine, identifiable farm products, and a beautiful agricultural landscape; and

WHEREAS, the priorities identified in the Suisun Valley Strategic Plan include maintaining and protecting its agricultural character, improving farm production, creating agri-tourism serving centers, and providing infrastructure to support these uses; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Resource Management, in consideration of the County's General Plan and the Suisun Valley Strategic Plan, has determined that Suisun Valley meets the criteria for a PCA, and that designation of Suisun Valley as a PCA by ABAG will make the area eligible for future PCA federal transportation funding.

RESOLVED, the Solano County Board of Supervisors supports an application to the Association of Bay Area Governments for the designation of Suisun Valley as a regional Priority Conservation Area.

Passed and adopted by the Solano County Board of Supervisors on February 19, 2013 by the following vote:

AYES: SUPERVISORS: Hannigan, Spering, Thomson, Vasquez, and Chair Seifert.

NOES: SUPERVISORS: None.

EXCUSED: SUPERVISORS: None.

Linda J. Seifert, Chair
Solano County Board of Supervisors

ATTEST:
Birgitta Corsello, Clerk
Board of Supervisors

By: Myra Chiula deputy
Patricia J. Crittenden, Chief Deputy Clerk

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