

II. Executive Summary

a. Project Title and Applicant Name

**Alhambra Creek Watershed CRMP Program
Contra Costa Resource Conservation District**

b. Project Description and Primary Biological / Ecological Objectives

GOAL: Facilitate, coordinate, and support the efforts of landowners, municipalities, community organizations, and citizens of the Alhambra Creek Watershed to develop and write a watershed management plan using the Coordinated Resource Management Planning (CRMP) process.

A citizens planning group will develop a watershed management plan which will address several natural resource issues including: restoration of degraded aquatic and riparian communities, prevention of soil erosion, reduction of non-point source water pollution, preservation of property rights, prevention of catastrophic wildfire. By addressing the watershed health as a whole, all of the watershed's components - soil, air, water, plants, animals, and people will benefit.

c. Approach / Tasks / Schedule

The Alhambra Creek Watershed CRMP Program is being developed using the Coordinated Resource Management and Planning (CRMP) approach. The CRMP process relies on three fundamental tenets: 1) local control of the planning process; 2)-consensus decision making; 3) voluntary implementation of the plan. The Alhambra Creek Watershed planning group is adhering strictly to the CRMP strategies and processes.

The development of the watershed plan is a collaborative process, involving the participation of several of landowners, municipalities, community organizations, and citizens from the area. Over two-thirds of the planning group is made up of local landowners. The planning group consists of:

- Local ranchers
- Residential landowners
- Contra Costa County Farm Bureau
- Environmental Alliance
- Martinez Regional Land Trust
- Friends of Alhambra Creek
- Friends of Franklin Hills
- Urban Creeks Council
- Martinez Chamber of Commerce
- City of Martinez
- Contra Costa County
- Contra Costa Central Sanitation District
- East Bay Regional Park District
- National Park Service

This project began in December 1995. Significant progress has been made to date. All of the groundwork is complete and the foundation has been laid. The Alhambra Creek Watershed planning group is ready to begin the "real" work by defining goals, objectives, and the resource tools to be used in developing the plan. The development of the watershed plan is broken into seven tasks. Two of the tasks have already been completed.

Task	Description	Start Date	Completion Date
Task 1	Project Management and Administration	December 1995	December 1999
Task 2	Determine Interest in Watershed Plan	January 1996	March 1997
Task 3	Inform Watershed Landowners	May 1996	June 1999
Task 4	Conduct Inventory and Monitoring	February 1996	June 1999
Task 5	Form Planning Group	March 1997	July 1997
Task 6	Develop Goals, Objectives, and Tools	September 1997	December 1998
Task 7	Write Watershed Plan	January 1999	November 1999

d. Justification for Project Funding by CALFED

The Alhambra Creek watershed plan is highly compatible with the CALFED goals and objectives. By approaching management of natural resources on a watershed basis, the health of the entire system and each of its components will be addressed. The watershed supports a number of priority species and habitats including steelhead trout, migratory birds, shaded riverine aquatic habitat, instream aquatic habitat, tidal perennial aquatic

habitat, and saline emergent aquatic habitat. The watershed suffers from many of the listed stressors, and more importantly, these stressors will be addressed through the watershed management plan. The watershed plan is adhering to the CRMP process, which ensures full community involvement and empowerment. Because this is the first watershed management plan being developed in Contra Costa County, all eyes are on the RCD. Funding from the CALFED Bay-Delta Ecosystem Restoration Projects and Programs will ensure the plan's success.

e. Budget Costs and Third Party Impacts

Contra Costa RCD is requesting \$138,500 from the CALFED Category III funds to aid in the development of the natural resources management plan for the Alhambra Creek Watershed. With these funds Contra Costa RCD will hire a watershed coordinator who will dedicate his/her full time to the development of the plan. As this project is the development of a watershed management plan, the majority of the costs are associated with the participants' time. Other costs include the augmentation of a geographical information system (GIS), purchase of a computer and associated software for the watershed coordinator position, and production of the plan once completed.

CALFED Requested Amount	\$ 138,500
Committed Matching Contributions	\$ 265,082
TOTAL PROJECT AMOUNT	\$ 403,582

Since the watershed plan has yet to be developed, it is impossible to quantify any potential third party impacts. The plan will be implemented on a *completely voluntary basis* therefore; negative third party impacts are not anticipated. However, positive third party impacts may occur including improved property values due to improved natural habitats, reduction of flooding damages, reduced risk of catastrophic wild fire within the watershed and improved financial opportunities for landowners to implement conservation plans associated with the watershed plan, as well as, an improved educational curriculum at John Muir Jr. High School through water quality monitoring.

f. Applicant Qualifications

Contra Costa Resource Conservation District is an independent special district dedicated to assisting private landowners in wisely managing their natural resources. Established in 1941, Contra Costa RCD has a long history of assisting farmers, ranchers, homeowners, and community groups through cooperative, voluntary programs. Contra Costa RCD has recently implemented grant contracts with US Environmental Protection Agency and the CA Dept. of Conservation successfully. The District is currently administering grant contracts with the San Francisco Regional Water Quality Control Board and the CA Dept. of Forestry.

g. Monitoring and Data Evaluation

The inventory and monitoring associated with the development of the plan has four aspects: 1) An inventory of the watershed's natural and cultural resources (completed in February 1997); 2) Volunteer water quality monitoring to establish baseline conditions; 3) Assessment of stream and riparian function through the Rapid Riparian Assessment protocol; 4) Development of a GIS and associated models.

h. Local Support / Coordination with other Programs / Compatibility with CALFED Objectives

Contra Costa RCD has garnered support of several local landowners, residents, civic groups, and local municipalities in the creation of the Alhambra Creek Watershed CRMP. The plan is being developed and written by the local citizens planning group. Additionally, there are nine technical and regulatory agencies advising the planning group. The local citizens planning group has been working closely with the City of Martinez in designing a flooding management program in downtown Martinez. The Alhambra Creek Watershed goals and objectives are highly compatible with the CALFED objectives that are now being funded at the mouth of the creek through the East Bay Regional Park District tidal channel wetland and restoration project. This plan will improve water quality, restore riparian and terrestrial habitat, as well as, the ecological health of all the components within the watershed, and maintain and / or enhance rare populations.