

R-23-37
Meeting 23-06
March 23, 2023

AGENDA ITEM #3

To: Board of Directors
Open Space Authority

From: Andrea Mackenzie
General Manager

SUBJECT

Informational Item: Natural Resources Department Update

REVENUE/COST

This item is informational with no revenue or cost associated. Discussions of positions and programs will be reviewed through the annual workplan and budget.

BACKGROUND

Natural resources protection and management is a core part of the Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority's (Authority) mission. In 2022, the Authority created the Natural Resources Department by hiring its first Natural Resources Manager to oversee the department and guide Natural Resources programs. In the first six months, the Natural Resources Manager Aaron Hébert, has worked to understand Authority operations, the history of Natural Resources work and staffing, and worked to coordinate the new department with Field Operations and Planning. In advance of the proposed workplan for Fiscal Year (FY) 2023/2024, Staff wishes to present information to the Board of Directors to provide additional context for the Natural Resources portion of the workplan.

DISCUSSION

The Natural Resources department is involved in many parts of the Authority's mission: assessing conservation values for land protection; providing environmental assessments for public access projects; and supporting the everyday stewardship of the land. A number of Natural Resources programs have been developed or are in development to date: Integrated Pest Management (IPM), the Fuels Management plan, and habitat restoration. Several areas of future need in Natural Resources are emerging from some of the Authority's planning efforts. The Coyote Valley Conservation Area Master Plan (CVCAMP) process envisions large scale natural resources restoration to support wildlife movement between the Santa Cruz Mountains and the Diablo Range and watershed restoration in the Fisher Creek sub-watershed and the Laguna Seca area and other restoration activities. Authority staff are also proposing to house large portions of the Agricultural Program through a position within the Natural Resources Department, starting in FY 23/24. The Natural Resources Department Manager will present an informational item describing current and future needs for Natural Resources work, outlines of staffing needs and recommendations, and answer questions about Natural Resources integration with the Authority programs, departments, and the mission.

RECOMMENDATION

Receive an informational presentation on the Natural Resources Department

Prepared by:
Aaron Hébert, Natural Resources Manager