

# FY22 Grant Application Summaries

## **Support Volunteer Cleanup Efforts and Education**

**Applicant:** IISME, dba Ignited

**Project Name:** Santa Clara Water Weeks: Environmental Justice

**Funding Request:** \$158,588.12

### **Project Summary:**

Ignited is a nonprofit on a mission to bring careers to every classroom—especially in under-resourced schools, where students lack access to role models in a variety of high-paying STEM careers. We build connections between industry and classrooms to bring STEM to life for teachers and their students.

Ignited's Water Weeks program was specifically designed to connect schools with their local utility agencies. Since 2016, this program has provided more than 160 teachers and an estimated 25,000 students with the opportunity to learn about water and wastewater careers and watershed stewardship.

We believe that the key to influencing education is teachers, who have the unique ability to change the trajectory of their students' lives—making them an ideal intermediary between water agencies and the upcoming generation. During these one-week experiences, teachers meet industry professionals and tour wastewater plants, and in the afternoons they work with a curriculum coach to create relevant lesson plans for their classrooms. We have found our teachers to be endlessly creative in connecting the subjects their students are learning with real-world water agency career examples while engaging them in conversations about reducing toxins, hazards, and contaminants in our waterways. For their time and full participation in the week, teachers are paid a \$1,000 stipend.

The Santa Clara Water Weeks: Environmental Justice will build upon our Santa Clara Water Weeks project that Valley Water funded as a part of its Safe, Clean Water and Natural Flood Protection Grants in 2021. The Santa Clara Water Weeks consisted of two externship weeks; one in summer 2021, hosted by Valley Water, and one that will take place in summer 2022 and will serve as a match, funded by BAYWORK and hosted by Gilroy Public Works, San José Environmental Services and Sunnyvale Environmental Services. The 2021 Valley Water Week was a huge success, with 100% of participants reporting that they learned about water and wastewater careers and that they plan to incorporate the lesson developed during the week into their classroom during the 2021/22 school year (for more information, see attached appendix of the evaluation from 2021; final report of student impacts to come in May 2022). To extend this project, we are requesting funding for one Water Week with Valley Water each summer over the next five years (summers 2022-2027). As projecting cost adjustments this far into the future can be a challenging task, we incorporated the standard inflation rate according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index (see attached appendices for a 2022 news release about a standard rate). For a year-by-year breakdown of how the inflation rate was applied to and impacts our budget, see the attached appendix.

Each summer, we will invite 10 Santa Clara County teachers from under-resourced schools serving disadvantaged communities to participate. We plan to hold these weeks in a hybrid format, with a few days in person and other days on Zoom, so we can take advantage of making in-person connections and reducing commuting barriers. However, we can easily

modify the programming to a fully remote format as we did in summer 2020 and 2021 if COVID-19 protocols change.

Each week will begin with a welcome from the Valley Water Board of Directors. During the weeks, Valley Water's Senior Water Resources Specialist will speak to the teachers about increasing permeability in urban areas and reducing waste and pollutants in riparian areas, waterways, and groundwater. Valley Water's Education Outreach Program will provide information about ways to creatively engage students in watershed stewardship and cleanup. Using a combination of interviews, tours of facilities and freshwater reservoirs and dams, videos, Q&A panels, and educational games and activities, teachers will learn about water and wastewater careers. Representatives from local community college programs, such as Gavilan Community College's Water Resources Management degree program, will also speak to give teachers insight into potential next steps for their high school students' careers. Ignited will work to prevent "Zoom fatigue" on the remote days by incorporating group hands-on activities, individual observations of local waterways, and other screen breaks. After engaging with watershed issues during the day, teachers will spend their afternoons working with a coach to craft lesson plans to bring back to their classrooms. These lessons will teach students how and why to reduce contaminants around waterways and will increase students' awareness of watershed stewardship and water careers, making these careers visible, appreciated, and accessible.

We are also adding two new features to this proposal: a focus on environmental justice, and ongoing engagements for teachers throughout the school year with a new webinar series.

The environmental justice focus is intended to both make the program more accessible for teachers serving under-resourced communities and to provide education around the subject of environmental justice itself. We will continue to prioritize middle and high school teachers working in schools that are located in environmentally disadvantaged areas, have high free and reduced lunch proportions, or have diverse student populations of more than 60% students of color. To reach a broad audience of students, we will recruit history and English teachers in addition to those who teach STEM subjects. These factors will ensure that the project will support Santa Clara communities whose water resources are particularly at risk and who are in need of stronger paths to livable wages.

While we already make an effort to recruit these teachers (63% of all Ignited teachers in 2021 were from under-resourced schools), we recently received an Equity Initiative grant from the Silicon Valley Community Foundation (SVCF) to support our efforts in listening to the voices of our teachers and company mentors to explore how we can better serve teachers in under-resourced schools, specifically in Santa Clara County. We are using part of this grant as a match for the project; from late September to December 2022, the grant activities will include consolidating information from teacher focus group interviews, conducting and consolidating information from company mentor focus groups, updating operational processes, implementing website changes to support these new operational needs and processes, educating staff and teachers on operational changes, and evaluating the Equity Initiative project via survey.

The main aspect of the SVCF grant that will serve as a match to the Santa Clara Water Weeks: Environmental Justice program is the staff time that will be spent on these activities. Ignited staff will identify and implement changes to improve how our programs impact all

teachers from under-resourced schools (especially in Santa Clara County) in future years—including these five Water Weeks with Valley Water.

In addition, each of the five weeks will include a minimum of one session on environmental justice and systemic inequities. During our 2021 Valley Water week, Dámaris Villalobos-Galindo from Valley Water and Jessica Ludy from the US Army Corps of Engineers spoke on systemic inequities in floodplain management. Our teachers found this session to be powerful and relevant for their students, so we are committed to integrate it into future Water Weeks to demonstrate to students how environmental justice plays an important role in watershed stewardship. These sessions can be on any aspect of environmental justice related to watershed management.

Teachers will learn what communities are disproportionately affected, various vulnerability factors, the historical policies and practices that led to this inequity, relevant legislation and legal decisions, present day barriers that increase susceptibility and decrease resilience, who plays a role in advancing social justice in water related careers, and solutions that lead to more social justice in watershed management. Teachers will include an aspect of environmental justice in their lesson plans to show students this important aspect of watershed stewardship.

The second new aspect of this program will be a webinar series to promote ongoing engagement between the teachers and water agencies. We will hold three webinars each year; each webinar will feature a water and wastewater agency speaker who will discuss their career path, a hands-on learning activity that teachers can bring to their classrooms, and designated time for teachers to network in breakout rooms. The program will specifically target all past participants of Water Weeks in Santa Clara County, and we will also open it up to teachers from other counties to attend, so teachers can expand their networks and learn about the water challenges faced across the Bay. This continued engagement will provide teachers with an ongoing network of support as they implement their learnings from the week into their classrooms, keeping them engaged with the local water agencies, water stewardship issues, and with each other.

Seventy-four percent of our teachers are historically from Santa Clara County; in the last five years, we have served 185 teachers from Santa Clara County, and over our 36 year history we have served 2,717.

**Applicant:** Saved By Nature  
**Project Name:** Headwaters to the Bay  
**Funding Request:** \$105,001.98  
**Project Summary:**

Saved By Nature's Headwaters to the Bay project consists of three components:

1) We will perform six participant outreach events at or near partner sites, each focused on a different disadvantaged neighborhood in Santa Clara County. Altogether these tabling and canvassing outreach events will target 16 low-income census tracts in Santa Clara County so that these disadvantaged communities will gain awareness of upcoming educational watershed hikes and stewardship opportunities within their neighborhoods and throughout Santa Clara County.

2) We will lead 12 culturally relevant watershed hikes designed for disadvantaged, multi-generational, communities of color and first-time park users to gain exposure to all of our local Bay Area watersheds as well as learn about protecting and maintaining water supplies, improving surface and ground water quality, reducing flood risk, protecting, enhancing and sustaining our natural ecosystem, mitigating and adapting to climate change, increasing permeability in urban areas, and Leave No Trace principles.

3) We will lead eight educational river cleanups where participants will gain exposure to our local creeks, create trash-free locations in riparian areas, and learn about reducing waste and other pollutants in our waterways, increasing permeability in urban areas, and using the best alternatives to single use items.

**Applicant:** South County Compassion Center (Gilroy Compassion Center)

**Project Name:** Unhoused Creek Cleanup

**Funding Request:** \$65,905.66

**Project Summary:**

The purpose of this project is to reduce contaminants entering Santa Clara County waterways and ground water by incentivizing volunteer waste collection by unhoused individuals, providing waste reduction education and waste removal service, in order to reduce garbage in riparian areas in the South County City of Gilroy.

**Applicant:** Marshmallow Minds

**Project Name:** Safe Birds, Safe Waters

**Funding Request:** \$68,600.00

**Project Summary:**

Because birds are part of the ecosystem, they can tell us about the health of the environment. Birds are relatively easy to see and hear compared to many other animals, so they are a great indicator of environmental health. Also, birds have become an essential part of human society and are often symbols in many cultures because they are everywhere. Appreciating birds and being in nature is also great for our physical and mental well being. For all these reasons, bird ecology topics provide an enriching learning opportunity that is highly engaging and experiential to children across diverse backgrounds.

For 40 years, the San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory(SFBBO) has conserved birds and their habitats through science. In addition, SFBBO strives to reconnect students with nature through education and outreach.

Since 2016, Marshmallow Minds has delivered quality in-school programs that meet the 21st-century learning standards to thousands of students in public schools in the bay area with the mission to make future-ready, highly engaging, and experiential education easily accessible and very affordable for everyone. Marshmallow Minds' program fosters children's STE(A)M, problem-solving, and socio-emotional learning (SEL) skills — the foundations for lifelong learning that allow children to stay curious, collaborative, and creative forever.

With support from Applied Materials Foundation, Cargill Foundation, and Valley Water, Marshmallow Minds and the SFBBO partnered in 2020 to design an environmental STEAM education program called From Bird's Eye View. Since then, we have developed and piloted a Migratory Birds and Their Conservation curriculum for 4th-8th grade students.

Safe Birds, Safe Waters, is an environmental STE(A)M education and community outreach project in partnership with the SFBBO, which aims at implementing the successfully piloted Migratory Birds and Their Conservation curriculum to 1000 more children from the under-resourced communities of Santa Clara County. The project will increase awareness and understanding of the need to conserve birds and their habitats and engage in hands-on problem-solving applying Design Thinking, especially in communities underrepresented in environmental STE(A)M. In addition to the experiential learning in the classroom, the Safe Birds, Safe Waters project will also provide students practical knowledge through outdoor field trip experience.

**Applicant:** Downtown Streets Team

**Project Name:** Upper Penitencia Creek Cleanup, Outreach, and Revitalization

**Funding Request:** \$98,478.40

**Project Summary:**

The mission of Downtown Streets Team (DST) is to restore dignity, inspire hope, and provide a pathway to recover from homelessness. Our innovative model involves building Teams comprised of individuals who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless and assisting them to rebuild positive work habits, expand their skill set, and overcome barriers as they work towards permanent employment and housing. Team Members contribute to community service projects while receiving access to case management, system navigation, and employment placement services from trained DST Case Managers and Employment Specialists. In the process, they provide an invaluable service to communities and help change perceptions around homelessness.

DST has been operating its award-winning model for engaging people experiencing homelessness in Santa Clara County since 2005 and in San Jose since 2011.

DST proposes to implement its model in the riparian corridor along Upper Penitencia Creek between Berryessa Road and Highway 680 during the fiscal year 2022-2023. Specifically, DST will recruit 6 Team Members to perform litter abatement and peer-to-peer outreach 5 days per week for up to 4 hours per day within the proposed project area (note: this excludes holidays or shifts cancelled due to inclement weather or unsafe working conditions AND includes travel time from Kelley Park to project area).

As part of DST's comprehensive impact measurement program, the organization will track hours worked, debris removed, and unduplicated individuals served throughout the project term.

It is important to emphasize that the project does not include vegetation removal, construction activities, heavy equipment, or any other invasive or potentially environmentally adverse activities. DST will carefully adhere and adapt its operations to any seasonal and species-specific regulations (as directed by Valley Water) such as trout and salmon spawning, burrowing owl breeding/nesting seasons, etc.

Together with Trash Punx, DST will organize and coordinate at least one quarterly community cleanup and educational event with stakeholders in and around the project area. Participants will include residents, business owners, students, and other stakeholders and interested parties.

The DST Work Experience project will result in approximately 5,750 person-hours of litter cleanup during the contract term.

DST will require vehicle access to non-publicly accessible areas within the project area in order to complete cleanup duties in those areas.

The requested funding will be primarily be used for operational costs (supplies, dump fees, volunteer incentives, etc.), staffing, legal, insurance, G&A, and education/community events. The proposed project will be administered and operated by our San Jose program staff and benefit unhoused residents of San Jose.

**Applicant:** Grassroots Ecology

**Project Name:** California Naturalist Watershed Education Project

**Funding Request:** \$40,212.50

**Project Summary:**

Grassroots Ecology will hold three sessions of the California Naturalist Course (1 session per year) to educate and certify local community members as California Naturalists. This certification program is housed in the UC Davis Agriculture and Natural Resources Department, which provides standards and training to organizations like Grassroots Ecology throughout the State to deliver the CA Naturalist training program to interested adult community members. Similar to the Master Gardeners Program, certified Naturalists go through a training program and then are expected to “give back” by sharing their new knowledge and skills in their communities. A total of 60-72 students will be certified as California Naturalists over the three year project.

Each 10-week course, to be offered annually for 3 years, will consist of the following components:

- 10 classroom lessons: Students in the course will learn about the importance of watersheds in providing ecosystem services including groundwater recharge, filtration of pollutants in stormwater, and flood mitigation. Students also learn about native California and invasive plant species in the local area, natural and cultural history of our region, and develop skills in nature observation, data collection, and interpretation.
- 4 field trips: Field visits to local natural areas will reinforce class concepts and provide hands-on education and service opportunities such as habitat restoration in local watersheds, water quality monitoring, benthic macroinvertebrate surveys, and species identification in the field.
- Contribution to a community science project: All class participants will spend approximately 4-6 hours contributing to a local community science project as a group.
- Naturalist Observations: Over the duration of the course, each student must maintain an iNaturalist account and add at least 10 observations.
- Completion of an individual Capstone Project: Students must spend at least 8 hours to complete a Capstone Project that contributes to the local environmental community.

**Applicant:** Guadalupe River Park Conservancy  
**Project Name:** Environmental Stewardship through Education & Program Scaffolding  
**Funding Request:** \$107,600.00  
**Project Summary:**

Partnership between GCRCD, SJ Water, and GRPC to provide environmental awareness, education, and training to promote connection between our communities and our natural resources, understand waterway systems and the human impacts on them, and inspire watershed stewardship. Our program strategy uses a scaffolding approach to our environmental education and enrichment programs, providing offerings most impactful to specific age-groups and building on those learnings to spark watershed and environmental stewardship.

The Project area is the Guadalupe River Park and Los Gatos Creek between the 880 and 280 freeways in central San Jose.

The scope also includes support that increases program reach, participant access, and honors important and underrepresented stories, particularly from marginalized communities, who are both affected and have a profound effect on our watersheds: stipends for cultural consultation with diverse community groups and indigenous leadership, verbal language and American Sign Language translations, and communications content creation.

Over the next two years, the program proposes:

80 Field Trips scholarships to Title One schools - audience target ages 5-12

50 Transportation stipends for Title One schools

6 service learning projects - audience target ages 12-22

16 public programs - all ages

2 Watershed workshops - all ages, target audience is adults

**Applicant:** Rural California Broadcasting Corp Krcb-TV Channel 22  
**Project Name:** Refreshing the Watershed: Steps You Can Take to Make a Difference," a series of short-form educational videos that outline the whys and hows for individuals to support Santa Clara Valley Watershed stewardship and organizations engaged in that stewardship

**Funding Request:** \$100,000.00

**Project Summary:**

With full funding, Northern California Public Media (NorCal) will create an extensive series of short interstitial documentary-style videos that will paint a picture of the complex, interconnected issues that affect the health of Santa Clara County's watersheds. Our lauded environmental journalists will work with environmental experts—including a wide range of SCVWD-approved creek clean-up organizations—to educate viewers on watershed challenges and opportunities, providing practical tips and tools to help viewers reduce waterway and groundwater contaminants in their own households and neighborhoods. This series will engage these community members and support watershed stewardship by amplifying creek clean-up organizations' own education outreach and encouraging community participation in those organizations' volunteer clean-up activities.

## **Pollution Prevention**

**Applicant:** Grassroots Ecology

**Project Name:** McClellan Ranch Community Garden Hedgerow Project

**Funding Request:** \$77,137.00

**Project Summary:**

The project will engage the community to create a native hedgerow and pollution prevention garden at McClellan Ranch Preserve in Cupertino, strategically positioned between the Community Garden/4-H area and Stevens Creek. Community Garden construction activities completed in fall 2021 resulted in soil compaction, erosion, and colonization of disturbed creekside areas by invasive poison hemlock. Now is an opportune time to restore and revegetate the area to rebuild soil health and permeability, prevent surface run-off from the garden and 4-H area, and prevent further encroachment by poison hemlock and other invasive weeds. Not only will the hedgerow and pollution prevention garden deliver these benefits, they will provide habitat for a diversity of pollinators and beneficial insects that deliver ecological services both to the garden and the natural ecosystem. Given the site's proximity to the creek, community garden, 4-H animal areas, and Stevens Creek Trail, it provides an ideal outdoor setting for teaching the community about pollution prevention, particularly the dangers of pesticides, chemical fertilizers, animal waste, and other non-point source pollutants to pollinators and creek life. We will engage and educate the public through 15 volunteer workdays to install and maintain native plantings and remove invasive plants and trash from the surrounding area; two bioblitzes to identify and document organisms that utilize the site; and development of native plant signs. Requested grant funds will support personnel and supply costs for the five tasks identified in the Scope, Schedule, and Budget, which include 1) Project Planning, 2) Growing native plants, 3) Habitat restoration and volunteer workdays, 4) Community education and monitoring (including community science biomonitoring and creation of plant signs), and 5) Project administration and coordination. The bulk of the cost (92%) will go toward implementation.

**Applicant:** The Regents of the University of California, Santa Cruz

**Project Name:** Identifying and quantifying atmospheric mercury inputs to Valley Water reservoirs using lichen bioindicators

**Funding Request:** \$93,613.00

**Project Summary:**

Santa Clara Valley Water District owns and operates reservoirs near the New Almaden Mining District (NAMD) that are contaminated with mercury (Hg) from historical mining operations. Despite numerous projects to clean up the mine waste and years of reservoir treatment, fish Hg levels are still unsafe for human and some wildlife consumption. Quantifying the relative contributions of Hg from different sources is paramount to designing remediation plans that achieve regulatory targets. The budget of mercury inputs to the reservoirs is not well known because atmospheric deposition of Hg has not been thoroughly studied, hence there is an opportunity to close some knowledge gaps for the benefit of society.

We are proposing a novel method to quantify Hg emission sources and deposition in the NAMD and Guadalupe Watershed using native lichens. We will analyze the lichens for stable isotopes of Hg using mass spectroscopy (ICPMS) and perform x-ray absorption spectroscopy (XAS). This will tell us the proportion of atmospheric deposition of Hg comes from local sources in the NAMD and the chemical form of Hg, which is an important predictor of its mobility and toxicity. Hg emissions and deposition hot-spots can be identified in the NAMD and



the importance of atmospheric deposition to the total Hg budget for the reservoirs can be assessed.

This project will also compile information on contaminated soil remediation methods, especially phytoremediation, and make recommendations for the benefit of all stakeholders, on the best areas to remediate and the most promising and cost-effective methods.

**Applicant:** Downtown Streets Team  
**Project Name:** Saratoga Creek Pollution Prevention  
**Funding Request:** \$80,478.40

**Project Summary:**

The mission of Downtown Streets Team (DST) is to restore dignity, inspire hope, and provide a pathway to recover from homelessness. Our innovative model involves building Teams comprised of individuals who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless and assisting them to rebuild positive work habits, expand their skill set, and overcome barriers as they work towards permanent employment and housing. Team Members contribute to community service projects while receiving access to case management, system navigation, and employment placement services from trained DST Case Managers and Employment Specialists. In the process, they provide an invaluable service to communities and help change perceptions around homelessness.

DST has been operating its award-winning model for engaging people experiencing homelessness in Santa Clara County since 2005 and in San Jose since 2011.

DST proposes to implement its model along two waterways identified by Valley Water staff as areas of need and priority: Saratoga Creek between Keily Blvd and Lawrence Expressway in Santa Clara and the Sunnyvale East Canal adjacent to Fair Oaks Park in Sunnyvale. DST proposes to launch and operate this project during the fiscal year 2022-2023, although we can implement the project at any time based on guidance and preference from Valley Water. In January of 2022, we were able to respond to a request by Knights Academy and Valley Water by providing outreach (pro bono) to several individuals who were encamped on the Sunnyvale East Canal adjacent to Fair Oaks Park. The goal was to develop relationships with the encamped individuals in order to ask them to relocate their belongings in advance of a VW fence repair project. At the time of this writing (3/3/22) the outreach has been productive and we are confident that the outreach will be successful in advance of the March 8 project date. The coordination between DST and VW has been proactive and productive and is an example of the type of work we'd continue under this agreement.

Specifically, DST will recruit 6 Team Members to perform litter abatement and peer-to-peer outreach 5 days per week for up to 4 hours per day within the proposed project area (note: this excludes holidays or shifts cancelled due to inclement weather or unsafe working conditions AND includes travel time from Kelley Park to project area).

As part of DST's comprehensive impact measurement program, the organization will track hours worked, debris removed, and unduplicated individuals served throughout the project term.

It is important to emphasize that the project does not include vegetation removal, construction activities, heavy equipment, or any other invasive or potentially environmentally adverse activities. DST will carefully adhere and adapt its operations to any seasonal and species-specific regulations (as directed by Valley Water) such as trout and salmon spawning, burrowing owl breeding/nesting seasons, etc.

The DST Work Experience project will result in approximately 5,750 person-hours of litter cleanup during the contract term.

DST will require vehicle access to non-publicly accessible areas within the project area in order to complete cleanup duties in those areas.

The requested funding will be primarily be used for operational costs (supplies, dump fees, volunteer incentives, etc.), staffing, legal, insurance, G&A, and education/community events. The proposed project will be administered and operated by our Sunnyvale program staff and benefit unhoused residents of Sunnyvale.

**Applicant:** Downtown Streets Team  
**Project Name:** Guadalupe River Pollution Prevention  
**Funding Request:** \$80,478.40  
**Project Summary:**

The mission of Downtown Streets Team (DST) is to restore dignity, inspire hope, and provide a pathway to recover from homelessness. Our innovative model involves building Teams comprised of individuals who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless and assisting them to rebuild positive work habits, expand their skill set, and overcome barriers as they work towards permanent employment and housing. Team Members contribute to community service projects while receiving access to case management, system navigation, and employment placement services from trained DST Case Managers and Employment Specialists. In the process, they provide an invaluable service to communities and help change perceptions around homelessness.

DST has been operating its award-winning model for engaging people experiencing homelessness in Santa Clara County since 2005 and in San Jose since 2011.

DST proposes to implement its model in the riparian corridor along the Guadalupe River in two specific areas identified by Valley Water staff as areas of need and priority: between Capitol Expressway and Blossom Hill and between Willow Street and Willow Glen Way. DST proposes to launch and operate this project during the fiscal year 2022-2023, although we can implement the project at any time based on guidance and preference from Valley Water. Specifically, DST will recruit 6 Team Members to perform litter abatement and peer-to-peer outreach 5 days per week for up to 4 hours per day within the proposed project area (note: this excludes holidays or shifts cancelled due to inclement weather or unsafe working conditions AND includes travel time from Kelley Park to project area).

As part of DST's comprehensive impact measurement program, the organization will track hours worked, debris removed, and unduplicated individuals served throughout the project term.

It is important to emphasize that the project does not include vegetation removal, construction activities, heavy equipment, or any other invasive or potentially environmentally adverse activities. DST will carefully adhere and adapt its operations to any seasonal and species-specific regulations (as directed by Valley Water) such as trout and salmon spawning, burrowing owl breeding/nesting seasons, etc.

The DST Work Experience project will result in approximately 5,750 person-hours of litter cleanup during the contract term.

DST will require vehicle access to non-publicly accessible areas within the project area in order to complete cleanup duties in those areas.

The requested funding will be primarily be used for operational costs (supplies, dump fees, volunteer incentives, etc.), staffing, legal, insurance, G&A, and education/community events. The proposed project will be administered and operated by our San Jose program staff and benefit unhoused residents of San Jose.

**Applicant:** County of Santa Clara  
**Project Name:** Green Business Program  
**Funding Request:** \$375,000.00  
**Project Summary:**

The small business community has suffered the most during the COVID-19 pandemic; many have closed and most are still trying to stay afloat. The County is seeking funding for expanding the Green Business Program to target and support small, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color businesses (henceforth 'Small Businesses') in underserved communities to improve environmental and business practices to conserve natural resources and prevent pollution while achieving cost savings and long-term business resiliency.

The Green Business Program is a compliance-based certification program operated in all 15 cities within Santa Clara County by the County of Santa Clara. Office of Sustainability has been able to assist hundreds of businesses through free technical assistance and connecting them to much needed resources and rebates. The Program requires businesses seeking certification to reduce environmental impacts in areas of water, energy, solid waste, transportation and take initiatives on pollution prevention best practices. In addition to these requirements, businesses must be in compliance with all federal and state compliance regulations in relating to hazardous waste, hazardous materials, wastewater, storm water, food permits, pool & spa safety, fire code, and all other permits as applicable to the business. As a result, businesses are not only improving their environmental impact but streamlining their operations and business practices, which have helped to achieve cost savings.

Even before the pandemic, small businesses often lack access, capacity, and opportunity to take advantage of resources, such as, capital, grants, and rebates to grow and make their business more resilient. In order to enhance outreach to small businesses and support continuity of operations and improvements in environmental practices, the County will shift how this program is administered. Historically with past grant funding from Valley Water, the County has billed Valley Water for County staff time for Green Business implementation. Moving forward, the County will subcontract with a community-based organization (CBO) with the expertise in green business certification and working with underserved business communities

for program implementation. This will ensure small businesses that have been overlooked throughout the lifetime of the GBP are prioritized and continue to improve small business resiliency for all businesses within Santa Clara County.

**Applicant:** ReScape California

**Project Name:** ReScape/Earth Foundries Bioswale Biochar Installation & Training Project

**Funding Request:** \$119,978.69

**Project Summary:**

The project will design and implement a minimum 2500 square foot stormwater/bioswale pollution prevention project in Santa Clara County incorporating biochar and adhering to the 8 ReScape principals for regenerative landscaping: act local, reduce waste, nurture soil, sequester carbon, save water, conserve energy, protect water and air, and create habitat. The project will reduce contaminants in local watersheds, educate the public on biochar's beneficial application on bioswale projects and leverage a Regional Conservation District's participation to strengthen the project outcomes and increase public outreach. Public outreach will include at least two press releases, a ribbon cutting or project opening ceremony for Valley Water District and project partners, a project website, ReScape Qualified Training at the project site during installation, and an educational workshop hosted by the Guadalupe Coyote Resource Conservation District (GCRCD).

**Applicant:** Guadalupe River Park Conservancy

**Project Name:** Preventing Litter to Restore the River Initiative

**Funding Request:** \$221,400.00

**Project Summary:**

Guadalupe River Park Conservancy (GRPC) is the City of San Jose's nonprofit partner for the development and activation of the Guadalupe River Park & Gardens. As part of our stewardship mission, we are seeking two years' funding to expand the collaborative partnerships with Downtown Streets Team, the San Jose Downtown Association through their Groundwerx program, and community volunteers to reduce the accumulation and impact of litter and dumping along the four-mile stretch of the Guadalupe River Trail between Skyport Drive and Virginia Street.

Through collaboration with local nonprofit partners and community volunteers, our goals are as follows: 1) reduce the quantity of litter and large volumes of debris along the trail, thereby reducing the potential for pollutants to enter the riparian corridor; 2) provide a rapid response to debris removal that can address more immediate pollutant threats; 3) increase outreach to homeless members of our community, including the provision of trash bags to encourage stewardship; and 4) promote the project, its partners and volunteers, to bring more awareness to the importance of water quality and to build momentum for future waterway stewards.

The project supports the following One Water Framework's objectives: B) Protect and improve surface and ground water quality, D) Protect, enhance, and sustain the natural ecosystem, E) Mitigate and adapt to climate change.

The project offers the following benefits desired in the grant guidelines: 1) Help prevent contaminants such as pharmaceuticals, household hazardous waste, and trash from entering our waterways, 2) Reduce contaminant source loads in groundwater and surface water, and protects local Watersheds, 3) Leverage community resources for efficient use of funds

## **Restore Wildlife Habitat**

**Applicant:** Grassroots Ecology

**Project Name:** Mountain View Tidal Marsh Restoration Project

**Funding Request:** \$250,562.50

### **Project Summary:**

The proposed project will restore tidal marsh habitat in Mountain View within an ecotone located between salt marsh and grassland. Special emphasis will be placed on enhancing native vegetation and refugia for two Federal and State Endangered Species, Ridgway's rail and the salt marsh harvest mouse, both of which need vegetative cover from predators when they move upland during higher tides. The project is based at Shoreline At Mountain View, a 750-acre wildlife and recreation area along San Francisco Bay. The project area is north of Shoreline Boulevard, across from the parking lot of the Shoreline Golf Links and immediately south of the Don Edwards National Wildlife Refuge ponds A1 and A2W. Restoration activities will include removal of invasive plants and trash across 2 acres; and propagation, installation, and maintenance of 1,750 watershed-specific native plants. Volunteers from the local community will assist with planting, invasive weed removal, trash pick-up, and other restoration activities; as well as community science events to identify and document organisms occurring in the project area. We will hold 40 workdays and 5 bioblitz events collectively engaging 475 volunteers, including both youth and adults. Requested grant funds will support personnel and supply costs for the five tasks identified in the Scope, Schedule, and Budget, which include 1) Project Planning, 2) Growing watershed-specific native plants, 3) Habitat restoration and volunteer workdays, 4) Biomonitoring (including implementation of pre/post surveys and community science monitoring, and 5) Project administration and coordination. The vast majority of the project cost (90%) will go toward implementation.

**Applicant:** Grassroots Ecology

**Project Name:** Arastradero Creek Floodplain Restoration Project

**Funding Request:** \$183,343.75

### **Project Summary:**

The proposed project will restore upland riparian habitat along the floodplain of Arastradero Creek, an intermittent stream in the Matadero Creek watershed with its headwaters in the Pearson-Arastradero Preserve. Restoration activities will include removal of invasive plants along 500 linear feet of creekbank and across 1.6 acres, with a focus on invasive Fuller's teasel and poison hemlock; and installation/maintenance of watershed-specific native plants grown at our Native Plant Nursery. Volunteers from the local community will assist with planting, invasive plant removal, sheet mulching, and vegetation monitoring while learning about the watershed and local species/ecosystems. The project is based at the Pearson-Arastradero Preserve, a 622-acre preserve in the foothills of Palo Alto. The preserve's main access point is its parking lot and gateway facility based at 1530 Arastradero Road. The project site is located across the road just west of the Gateway facility at Gate A. The project area is easily accessible via walking trails that connect to the parking lot and road. Habitat restoration activities will include invasive plant management across 70,000 square feet/1.6 acres in alignment with our management plan (see Task 1), sheet mulching of restoration plots in the summer/fall to prepare for planting (an estimated 300-500 square feet), installation of 1,500 watershed-specific plants grown at our Native Plant Nursery, and ongoing plant maintenance including weeding, watering, pruning, and mulching to ensure successful establishment. We will hold 40 workdays in which an estimated 500 volunteers will assist our

staff with these activities while learning about the riparian ecosystem and why creek and watershed health is important for wildlife and humans alike. Requested grant funds will support personnel and supply costs for the five tasks identified in the Scope, Schedule, and Budget, which include 1) Project Planning, 2) Grow watershed-specific native plants, 3) Habitat restoration and volunteer engagement, 4) Monitoring (including pre/post project invasive species maps and vegetation surveys), and 5) Project administration and coordination. The vast majority of the project cost (95%) will go toward implementation.

**Applicant:** Talon Ecological Research Group

**Project Name:** Fisher Creek Enhancement Project

**Funding Request:** \$299,158.94

**Project Summary:**

Talon Ecological Research Group proposes to enhance native understory vegetation in a riparian corridor and adjacent upland areas along the northwestern bank of Fisher Creek within the Landtrust of Santa Clara Valley's Metcalf Energy Center Ecological Preserve (MECEP). Native vegetation will provide habitat and food resources for native fauna including pollinator species, birds, amphibians, reptiles, and small mammals. Activities will include removal of invasive non-native weeds and subsequent installation/maintenance of native plants acquired locally at Grassroots Ecology Native Plant Nursery. Additionally, we will install nest boxes for cavity-nesting bird species that commonly occur in this riparian corridor, as well as bat and invertebrate boxes. We will recruit volunteers from the local community to help with activities including planting, weeding, trash pick-up, and nest box installation.

Fisher Creek flows 13.8 miles northwesterly through the Coyote Valley in Santa Clara County. The creek is a tributary to Laguna Seca, the largest freshwater wetland in the County, which is vital for groundwater recharge. Our proposed project area is located east of Laguna Seca and west of Coyote Creek within the MECEP. The MECEP was established to conserve and manage habitat for several target species listed as threatened or endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act, including California red-legged frog (*Rana aurora draytonii*), Bay checkerspot butterfly (*Euphydryas editha ssp. bayensis*), and Santa Clara Valley dudleya (*Dudleya abramsii ssp. Setchellii*). Other special-status species that may benefit from management at the MECEP include California tiger salamander (*Ambystoma californiense*), Western pond turtle (*Clemmys marmorata*), Western burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia hypogya*), Opler's longhorn moth (*Adela oplerella*), and most beautiful jewelflower (*Streptanthus albidus ssp. peramoenus*). With our proposed work we will enhance approximately 2000 linear feet of sensitive riparian habitat and approximately 2.5 acres of adjacent upland habitat in support of wildlife.

**Applicant:** The California Native Garden Foundation

**Project Name:** Coyote Creek Habitat enhancement and Education programs for training young populations on native species, restoration ecology, and regenerative organic agricultural practices.

**Funding Request:** \$53,314.00

**Project Summary:**

CNGF seeks funds for habitat enhancement of a farm land in Coyote Creek by planting native species, restoring the local ecosystems and developing education certificates for training young populations on native species, restoration ecology, and regenerative organic agricultural practices. We believe all sustainable climate solutions begin with local communities. Santa

Clara valley was once known as “the valley of the heart’s delight,” boasting some of the planet’s most fertile agricultural soils and a benign Mediterranean climate. With these resources, indigenous people have thrived in California for over 30,000 years. Today, with the technological skills and design thinking problem-solving abilities centered here in Silicon Valley, we can benefit enormously from both our abundant natural resources and new farming technologies by designing, building, and managing Regenerative Organic Agriculture (ROA) farms and by practicing ecological land management. Engagement of kids, youth, perpetual learners and seniors is one of the goals of the project. We’ll be organizing garden/farm tours and training sessions primarily to start a movement of change towards lifelong learning by engaging school children, parents and teachers, and community members in garden projects thereby increasing the awareness of native flora and fauna species, regenerative food growing practices, fostering a sense of place, and a long-term meaningful mental and physical connection to the natural world around them. This project will also serve as a model that can be replicated as outdoor teaching gardens at schools and preserve acres through conversion of the paved schoolyards to green open spaces producing edible natives and other sustainable and drought responsive food plants.

**Applicant:** Leading Youth For Ecology

**Project Name:** LYFE Fund

**Funding Request:** \$3,000.00

**Project Summary:**

- Funding the materials for different aspects of our club

1. Advertisements

\* Poster paper, paint and supplies to make advertisements to promote our club

\* Adobe creative cloud and microsoft office 365 for making digital content

\* Club website maintenance fees

2. Guest Speaker Session

\* Costs for inviting guest speakers

\* Fees for Zoom Pro for online guest speaker sessions and online club meetings

3. In-person Service Project

\* Fees renting or buying for tools for service project

\* Travel Fees for service projects

\* Food and Snacks during club events

4. Miscellaneous:

\* Fees for club merch and memoire for guest speakers and members

**Access to Trails & Open Space**

**Applicant:** Town of Los Gatos

**Project Name:** Los Gatos Creek Trail to Highway 9 Trailhead Connector

**Funding Request:** \$1,400,000.00

**Project Summary:**

The project is the construction of bike and pedestrian connectors to the Los Gatos Creek Trail at Highway 9. Two connectors will be constructed to allow access to the trail from both the north and south sides of Highway 9. A pedestrian and bicycle bridge crossing the creek will be constructed along the south side of Highway 9. On the north side of Highway 9, the existing unofficial path will be replaced with an ADA-accessible Class I path to connect Highway 9 and the Trail.

This project is the direct result of a community engagement process. It was first identified in the 2017 Los Gatos – Monte Sereno Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (BPMP) and again listed in the 2020 BPMP Update as one of the priority projects. It was included in the 2016 Santa Clara County Measure B ballot language. Because this project would close a critical gap on several bike/walk paths to local schools, the Los Gatos – Monte Sereno Safe Route to School, Los Gatos Union School District, and Los Gatos High School are strong supporters of this project. Federal grant funding was secured for the design of the Trailhead Connector Project, and the project is now construction ready, pending the securing of funding.