



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

R-19-98
Meeting 19-19
July 24, 2019

AGENDA ITEM 12

AGENDA ITEM

Grant Awards for the Fiscal Year 2018-2019 Grantmaking Program

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

Approve the recommended grant awards for the Fiscal Year 2018-2019 Grantmaking Program.

SUMMARY

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) staff released the first grant program solicitation under the District's Grantmaking Policy, as approved and revised by the Board of Directors (Board) in 2018. The solicitation focused on three funding priorities outlined in the policy: Applied Science; Networks and Partnership Support; and Access, Interpretation, and Education. A total of \$250,000 is available for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2018-19 funding round. The District received 21 proposals totaling \$762,853 in funding requests. Fourteen of the applicants applied to the Access, Interpretation, and Education Program; five to Applied Science; and two to Partnership and Network Support.

Based on the application evaluation and scoring by the staff-composed Grantmaking Advisory Committee, the General Manager recommends funding seven (7) proposals, which will allocate the funding as follows: four grants under Education, Access, and Interpretation; two under Applied Science; and one under Networks and Partnership Support. Grantees include Environmental Volunteers, Groundswell Coastal Ecology, San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory (one Applied Science grant and one Education, Access, and Interpretation grant), Thrive Alliance, University of California at Santa Cruz, and Vida Verde Education Center. In addition, two additional proposals from the Santa Cruz Mountains Stewardship Network and Bay Area Older Adults, will be funded separately as contracts through the Natural Resources and Public Affairs Departments, respectively.

The Legislative, Funding, and Public Affairs Committee (LFPAC) forwarded these recommended projects to the Board of Directors, and if approved, the Grants Program will execute grant agreements September 2019. Grantees will then have three years to complete the projects.

DISCUSSION

In 2018, the Board approved a revised Grantmaking Policy, which set forth a renewed commitment to provide funding under a wide set of funding priorities to external organizations that support the District's mission. The purposes of this program are to a) expand the District's reach by furthering its mission through outside partnerships, b) build and deepen existing

relationships with partners, and c) learn from partners. With these goals in mind, the revised policy established three funding priorities: Applied Science; Networks and Partnership Support; and Access, Interpretation, and Education. These funding priorities reflect both the District's mission and priorities as well as the funding need within the community. A total of \$250,000 was available in this funding round.

The solicitation outlined the funding priorities as well as other program parameters, including two grant funding levels, "Sprouts" at up to \$25,000 and "Roots" at up to \$50,000 (Attachment 1). By having two funding levels, the District will encourage smaller organizations to apply by simplifying reporting requirements for smaller grants. Eligible organizations included public agencies, K-12 schools or academic institutions, non-profits, and private organizations with an established fiscal sponsor. Projects do not need to take place on District land but do need to support the District's mission. Project terms are up to three years.

District staff broadly distributed the grant solicitation to a range of potentially interested groups and public listservs, and shared the information through a press release, the District's website, and social media. From this solicitation, the District received 21 proposals, including 14 Education, Interpretation, and Access proposals; five Applied Science proposals; and two Network and Partnership Support proposals (Attachment 2). In aggregate, applicants requested a total of \$762,853 in funding.

Once the solicitation period closed, District staff conducted an administrative review to ensure all applicants and projects were eligible under the solicitation guidelines. To score the applications, District staff created an Advisory Committee, which included the Grants Program Manager and one or two representatives from Natural Resources, Visitor Services, and Planning to ensure subject matter expertise. The Grants Program Manager and an applicable Advisory Committee member with relevant expertise then scored each application. Scoring criteria included:

- Fit with program priorities and overall project impact
- Project readiness
- Organizational capacity
- Leadership and innovation
- Additional project characteristics (e.g., multiple benefits)
- New District grantee
- Project sustainability after funding ends (Roots proposals only)
- Collaboration and partnership (Roots proposals only)

Scorers ranked the proposals against the stated criteria and reviewed them to ensure District staff resources were available to support the proposals that required collaboration with the District. The Grants Program Manager and Advisory Committee subsequently shared the list of recommended projects with the Executive Management Team for review and input.

Due to the high number of competitive proposals, District staff selected those that most closely matched the scoring priorities. Seven proposals are recommended for funding, one of which is recommended for partial funding (Thrive Alliance). Below is a summary of the projects recommended for funding (Attachment 3). All the recommended proposals will further the District's mission, expand partnerships, and directly benefit the scientific and conservation community and District residents.

Environmental Volunteers - \$25,000

The mission of Environmental Volunteers is to promote understanding of and responsibility for the environment through hands-on environmental science education. Environmental Volunteers is working on a collaborative interpretation project with the City of Palo Alto and the City of East Palo Alto to bring their respective communities together in the care and preservation of the marshlands of the Palo Alto Baylands Nature Preserve. The project will focus on the installation of interpretative panels and exhibits along two miles of multi-use trails between the Cooley Landing Education Center and Lucy Evans Nature Center, and on the Evans Center's adjoining boardwalk that extends into the marsh. The proposed multi-sensory, bilingual interpretive panels and interactive exhibits will engage baylands visitors to learn about salt marsh ecology, how citizens and cities work with local agencies to monitor biological impacts, and what steps Bay Area residents can take on their own to protect the marsh. Funding will be used for the interpretive design of the panels, with construction costs being funded through a California Outdoor Environmental Education Facilities grant. Supporting this interpretive design would enable the Cities of Palo Alto, East Palo Alto, and the District to connect the visitor experience between Ravenswood Open Space Preserve, Cooley Landing Park, and the Palo Alto Baylands Nature Preserve with interpretive and educational themes, panels and exhibits along the baylands.

Groundswell Coastal Ecology - \$49,025

Groundswell Coastal Ecology is a fiscally-sponsored organization under Social and Environmental Entrepreneurs. Groundswell is proposing a collaboration with Pescadero High School located in the San Mateo County Coast to engage students in a hands-on learning experience focusing on how to make the ecological and social communities of the Central California coastline more resilient. Building on curricula implemented with Central Coast schools over the past five years, students will learn about methodologies for site assessment and implementation of green infrastructure to help increase coastal resiliency. The selected site is Tunitas Creek Beach County Park, which is owned by Peninsula Open Space Trust, with the intent to transfer property ownership to San Mateo County. Students will identify coastal resilience needs and gaps at the site (with focus on development pressures, visitor impacts, and climate change) and use Design Thinking Theory to develop site-specific solutions. Students will then present the top-ranking proposals to the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors or Coastal Commission. This project will increase student understanding of coastal resilience challenges and solutions, and has the potential to further on-the-ground project implementation.

San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory – Restoring Transition Habitat with Bird Nests – \$24,704

The San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory (SFBBO) is dedicated to the conservation of birds and their habitats through science and outreach. The SFBBO will collaborate with Santa Clara University to examine historic bird nests collected in transitional habitat to better understand the plant composition of the surrounding ecosystem. Most transitional habitat has been urbanized and where natural habitat remains, invasive exotic plants and cessation of grazing and fire regimen have altered the habitat. Through nondestructive sampling, SFBBO will examine the molecular makeup of the nests to provide a proof-of-concept that would allow future work to reconstruct the historical plant community of transitional habitat. This information is valuable for the District and others to inform future transitional habitat restoration planning.

San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory – Bird Outreach - \$25,000

SFBBO will deliver free outreach programs to increase science literacy, appreciation for birds, and an understanding of issues facing birds. District funding will support an Outreach Specialist

to deliver the following programs: a) Birds in Your Neighborhood events in residential locations to help people embrace birds as part of their community, b) Bird, Nature and Habitat Walks, which are one to three-hour bird and nature walks focused on species identification, habitat restoration, nature journaling, data collection, and photography, c) Science Presentations, an environmental science talk series, and d) Family and Youth Science Events, one-hour children-focused events to expose participants to different aspects of being a scientist and to encourage an interest in nature and science. Ten of the Bird, Nature, and Habitat Walks will take place within the District's jurisdiction and many of them on District preserves, and all four science talks and all eight family events will take place within the District's jurisdiction.

Thrive Alliance - \$25,000

Founded in 2000, Thrive Alliance's vision is to support and promote a network of nonprofit, government, business and community leaders with a shared commitment to strengthening the nonprofit sector, thereby improving the quality of life in our community and the San Francisco peninsula. In 2018, Thrive formed Thrive Action Groups (TAGs) in five key issues areas. The Environmental and Sustainability TAG targets leaders in the community to convene once a month to discover and discuss real-time challenges and solutions in the natural conservation landscape through the lens of equity and sustainability. Its goal is to identify areas and actions for members to collectively advocate for positive change. Thrive has 95 attendees from 68 organizations, with an average attendance of 20 per session. Meetings include one or two guest speakers within a theme around issues related to sustainability followed by open discussion. The network includes a variety of organizations, including nonprofits, government, business, and education, providing the opportunity to build cross-sector and cross-jurisdictional relationships and knowledge. District funding will support the organizational capacity and staff support for these meetings to grow the network and deliver high-quality programming that is well-facilitated, relevant to participants, and delivers focused post-meeting follow up to sustain the conversations. Supporting this network would enable the District to broaden its connections with a wide spectrum of organizations and discover new opportunities to partner.

University of California, Santa Cruz - \$49,375

The University of California at Santa Cruz will investigate the extent to which native forbs are pollen limited and whether pollen limitation is exacerbated by the invasion of French broom. Researchers will a) collect baseline information on pollen limitation of native forbs with a pollen supplementation experiment, b) quantify the movement of pollinators from French broom flowers to native flowers and vice versa and quantify French broom pollen on native plant stigmas, and c) assess the consequences of French broom pollen deposition on native forb reproduction by measuring seed set. The results will provide important information about pollen limitation of key native species on District preserves, and an assessment of the impact of French broom through competition for pollinators. This information could help inform invasive pest management practices within District preserves.

Vida Verde Education Center - \$50,000

Vida Verde's mission is to promote educational equity by providing free overnight environmental learning experiences at their farm in San Gregorio for students who would not otherwise have the opportunity. Attendees are 99% youth of color, 85% qualify for free or reduced-price lunch programs in their schools, and none of them would otherwise have the chance to participate in outdoor education programs. District funding will support this core school-year programming as well as Vida Verde's second year of its new Summer Leadership Camp, which engages high school students in mentoring younger children. This camp focuses on

alumni of Vida Verde’s core school-year program and builds on their experiences and growth as leaders. The program’s goal is to expand from 9 students and serve 30 high school aged participants from low-income Bay Area schools to build on the programming and success of the first year. Both programs have the same goal to help kids from urban neighborhoods feel comfortable in the outdoors, spark a lifelong interest in learning and exploring, and build confidence. This programming will directly benefit low income and underserved residents within the District’s jurisdiction and the surrounding communities.

Partnership Contracts – separate from the Grantmaking Program

In addition to recommending the above proposals for funding, two additional proposals were considered for funding through the Grantmaking Program but will instead be executed as contracts. First, the proposal submitted by the San Mateo Resource Conservation District on behalf of the Santa Cruz Mountain Stewardship Network ranked high when scored by the committee. However, rather than disburse funds through this grant program, District staff will instead expand the existing contract with the group by \$30,000 over the next three years. Next, after feedback from LFPAC, funding for the Bay Area Older Adults was augmented through the Public Affairs budget up to \$15,000 and will now be executed as a separate contract instead of through the Grantmaking Program.

Grant Administration

Once grants are awarded, the Grants Program Manager will administer the grant agreements and monitor grant progress. In addition, the Advisory Committee will select one department representative to provide subject matter expertise and gauge grant progress and build ongoing collaborative relationships with the organization. Per the grant agreement, grantees will submit reimbursement requests up to four times per year along with supporting documentation. Grant awardees will be required to identify the District during public announcements related to the project and be available to the present to the District’s Board of Directors on an annual basis.

FISCAL IMPACT

Grant funding will be allocated from the General Fund and will total \$250,000 from FY2019-20 through FY2021-22. There are sufficient funds in the adopted FY2019-20 Administrative Services budget to cover the cost of the recommendation. It is projected that there will be sufficient funds to cover the cost of the recommendation in future fiscal years. Future fiscal year budgets will be adopted annually as a part of the annual Budget and Action Plan process.

Expenditures are currently planned as followed:

FY2019-20	FY2020-21 – FY2021-22	Total
\$184,104	\$64,000	\$248,104

The remaining \$1,896 of the available \$250,000 will be made available for Public Affairs to augment a contract to Bay Area Older Adults, which will be administered as a contract through the Public Affairs Department rather than through the Grantmaking Program.

BOARD COMMITTEE REVIEW

This item was previously reviewed by LFPAC on June 11, 2019 and the recommended proposals were advanced to the full Board of Directors for approval, with the exception of Bay Area Older Adults, which was instead transferred to Public Affairs to be executed as a partnership contract.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

All funded projects have been evaluated under CEQA. Two of the seven proposals recommended for funding could result in a potential effect on the environment and are described below.

Environmental Volunteers: The District determined that the installation of interpretative panels (approximate number?) along multi-use trails in the vicinity of the Cooley Landing Education Center and an adjoining boardwalk is categorically exempt under Article 19 of the CEQA Guidelines as follows:

Section 15304(d): This class of projects consists of minor alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve the removal of healthy, mature scenic trees. The proposed project consists of installation of approximately one hundred signs. It does not involve the removal of any trees.

Section 15311(a): This class of project consists of the construction of minor accessory structures.

San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory and University of California, Santa Cruz: The District determined that the grantee's activities funded by the District (sampling of bird nests, and observations of plant pollen production, respectively) are categorically exempt under Article 19 of the CEQA Guidelines as follows:

Section 15306: Information Collection Class 6 consists of basic data collection, research, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities which do not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource. These activities may be strictly for information gathering purposes, or as part of a study leading to an action, which a public agency has not yet approved, adopted, or funded.

NEXT STEPS

Pending Board approval of the applications, the Grants Program Manager will work with the grantees to execute grant agreements by September 2019. Once awarded, the Grants Program Manager will administer the grant and work with an assigned department liaison to track progress against the deliverables. Grantees will be able to submit for reimbursements on a maximum quarterly basis, and District staff will use the accompanying status reports in addition to periodic check-ins to track grant progress. District staff will annually update the Board of Directors on the status of the Grantmaking Program.

Attachments

1. 2019 Grant Solicitation
2. Abstracts of All Proposals Received
3. List of all Grant Proposals Received

Responsible Department Head:

Stefan Jaskulak, CFO/Director of Administrative Services

Prepared by:

Melanie Askay, Grants Program Manager

Contact person:

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Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District
Grantmaking Program

February 2019

Introduction and Purpose

The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's (Midpen) Grantmaking Program will make \$250,000 in funding available to public agencies, nonprofits, K-12 schools and academic institutions, and private organizations to:

- Support projects that further the Midpen's [mission](#);
- Build the capacity of academic and nonprofit institutions in order to sustain and grow the conservation field; and
- Facilitate Midpen's mission and work by building and strengthening partnerships.

Who We Are

Midpen is an independent special district that has preserved over 63,000 acres of public land and manages 26 open space preserves. Its purpose is to create a regional greenbelt of unspoiled public open space lands in order to permanently protect the area's natural resources and to provide for public use and enjoyment. Midpen's mission is:

To acquire and preserve a regional greenbelt of open space land in perpetuity; protect and restore the natural environment; and provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education.

Funding Priorities

Grantmaking will be guided by an emphasis on investments that reflect a regional focus and provide avenues for partnership, both with the Midpen as well as among other stakeholders. Applicants will be directed to apply for one of the three funding categories described below, although multi-benefit projects are encouraged.

1. Applied Science

Proposals under the Applied Science category should focus on academic or practitioner science projects that support the protection and enhancement of natural resources on Midpen lands. The purpose of this support is to develop and disseminate information that advances scientific understanding of natural processes. Proposals submitted in this round must focus on *Our Changing Ecosystems*, described below.

Our Changing Ecosystems

A host of challenges face our world today. Climate change is impacting ecosystems in a myriad of known and unknown ways, from increased variability in precipitation and vulnerability to fire, to changes in species distributions and dispersal patterns. As a result, ecosystems are facing a combination of accelerated and new stressors, inhibiting the ability to rebound from any one event.

Proposals should focus on research that seeks to understand these changes, with an emphasis on how to improve land and resource stewardship practices in response. Types of projects may

include applied academic research or proof-of-concept, and may focus on a variety of topics relating to our changing ecosystems, including, but not limited to climate change and carbon sequestration, habitat fragmentation, fire ecology, drought and flood management or watershed function, plant pathogens, population shifts, or species responses to habitat loss or climate change.

Example projects:

- Research that examines the ecology and potential mitigation strategies to combat the spread of Phytophthora;
- Vegetation mapping that contributes to an understanding of how ecosystems are changing (e.g., fine-scale fire risk mapping that results in a coordinated approach to vegetation management), or;
- Regional carbon sequestration planning or implementation on working lands.

2. Network and Partnership Support

California's largest and most pressing challenges require working together to discover and implement innovative solutions. Landscape-scale stewardship is critical to ensuring solutions are scalable and have broad impact. Consequently, this funding category focuses on grant proposals that cultivate, sustain, or grow established conservation networks.

Although future funding rounds may allow for establishment of new working groups or networks, in this round only projects submitted by established groups or networks will be considered. Groups or networks should be primarily oriented towards topics that relate to land management, conservation, or public access to outdoor recreation. Proposals should focus on developing organizational capacity or implementing projects to engage the group on working together towards developing shared priorities, exchanging best practices, or collaborating on research or educational outreach and education/interpretation, etc. Types of support can include but are not limited to meeting facilitation or other consulting support, staff time for network participation, outreach, meeting supplies, etc.

Example projects:

- Development of a data sharing system for a network;
- Consulting and staff time support to build a strategic plan for a working group to coalesce around a shared understanding for how participants will work together;
- Consulting or staff time support to build organizational capacity to devote time towards building the network and dedicate time towards regular communication and collaborate under a joint vision; or
- Support to organize convenings to share research and best practices related to natural resource management.

Please note that funds cannot be used for policy or advocacy and therefore lobbying support is not an eligible project type.

3. Access, Interpretation and Education

Funding for access, environmental interpretation, and education will be directed towards facilitating equal opportunity for all residents to take advantage of Midpen lands while fostering an appreciation for open space protection, nature study and appreciation, cultural resource understanding, and environmental stewardship. Proposals should focus on projects that contribute understanding and appreciation of our natural systems, facilitate opportunities for outdoor engagement and nature-based experiences, especially for underserved communities, or provide nature-based educational and interpretive experiences for children or adults.

Funding can be used for staff time to create or execute programming, provide transportation to opportunities for outdoor engagement or nature-based experiences, facilitate knowledge of outdoor recreational opportunities, access to the outdoors, environmental stewardship activities, etc. However, transportation-related projects must be to and from Midpen preserves.

Example Projects:

- Public access or educational programs for families or students;
- Develop and/or improve interpretive signs and services along trails;
- Complete gaps in a regional trail system that connect communities to trails and open space; or
- Outreach and activity programs that encourage outdoor engagement and nature-based experiences in underserved communities.

Funding

A total of \$250,000 in grant funding is available in FY18-19. Two funding tiers are available in this round:

- Sprouts Program for projects up to \$25,000; and
- Roots Program for projects up to \$50,000.

Applicants should select the program that matches the amount of funding requested. All three funding priorities are eligible for either the Roots or Sprouts Programs. Application and reporting requirements will vary between the two programs, with the Roots Program requiring additional detail in the proposal during proposal development and reporting (see [Grant Agreement and Reporting](#) for detail).

General Requirements and Grant Restrictions

Eligible organizations

Eligible applicants must be a public agency, K-12 school or academic institution, or non-profit organization (501(c)(3)). Applicants with eligible projects that are not one of these entities such as a private organization may work through a fiscal agent to apply as long as the fiscal sponsorship is established before application submittal and the project has a primarily charitable, scientific, or educational purpose.

Faculty at accredited academic institutions must sponsor research-related projects; practitioner science projects may require faculty sponsorship and will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Please contact the [Grants Officer](#) prior to application submittal to establish whether a faculty sponsorship will be required.

Project Location

Projects without a field work component need not take place within the Midpen's boundaries but all projects must support the Midpen's mission. All proposed field work must take place on Midpen preserves and transportation-related projects must be to and from Midpen preserves. Please work with the Midpen staff prior to application submittal to discuss potential projects.

Grant period

The project performance period is three years after the grant agreement is executed (anticipated September 2019).

Eligible Costs and Funding Restrictions

Eligible Costs

Grant funds may be used to cover expenses related to the implementation of proposed events or programs. Matching funds are not required but we encourage applicants to look for creative ways to combine funds to create a more complete or effective project. Project costs must be consistent with the approved project and incurred during the performance period as specified in the grant agreement. Below illustrates examples of eligible costs:

Budget Item	Eligible Cost	Required Documentation
Salaries, wages, and benefits	Salaries and wages of employees employed by the Grantee who is directly engaged in the execution of the grant project. Benefits include employer contribution of fringe benefits.	Timesheets or similar documentation detailing days and hours worked on the project.
Consultants and contractors	Direct consultant and contractual services necessary to achieve the objectives of the grant.	Invoices from consultant/contractor identifying expenditure, services performed and period of services.
Travel	Travel costs associated with travel to and from project sites, meetings, etc. directly related to the grant project. Costs must be considered reasonable and necessary for the completion of the project.	Receipts identifying travel costs (i.e. lodging, rental cars). Mileage must be documented by either employee travel claims or vehicle mileage logs for vehicles owned by the Grantee.
Equipment and supplies	Supplies required for project or program execution.	Receipts identifying item purchased, cost, and date of

		purchase. Use of Grantee equipment must be substantiated with an equipment usage log that identifies the equipment used, rate, and total rental cost.
Indirect and other	Indirect Costs are costs associated with doing business that are of a general nature and are incurred to benefit two or more functions within the Grantee organization. See indirect cost policy below.	Applied on a percentage basis of direct costs.

Ineligible costs: The following activities and costs will not be covered by this funding:

- Conducting lobbying, carrying on propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation or political decision making;
- Influencing the outcome of any specific election through any means;
- Purposes other than those that are charitable, scientific, or educational;
- Fundraising purposes;
- Budget shortfalls or endowment funds;
- Scholarships, fellowships, or grants to individuals;
- Land acquisition or real estate purchases;
- Costs incurred before or after the project performance period; or
- Late fees, penalties, and bank fees.

Indirect cost policy: A maximum of 15% of each grant may be allocated toward indirect costs. Direct costs include all of the expenses that are required for project execution and can be directly linked to the project. This includes, but is not limited to personnel, consultants, equipment, and capital expenditures. Indirect costs are those expenses that cannot be linked directly to the project. Indirect costs can be a separate line item in the budget but the 15% allocation must exclude the following direct costs: consultants, contractors, and sub-grants; equipment and capital expenditures; fee-for-service charges; and fiscal sponsor fees.

Application Process and Submittal

All application submittals will take place through the AmpliFund online platform at:

<https://www.gotomygrants.com/Public/opportunities/midpeninsula-regional-open-space-district>

Applicants will be directed to create a username and password and upload the required information online. When beginning an application users will be directed to select from either the Sprouts or Roots Programs and then select the applicable funding priority. See Appendix A for application requirements.

Midpen is not soliciting, does not wish to receive, and will not treat any information received as part of a grant application as proprietary or confidential information.

If you need help with the online portal contact Melanie Askay at maskay@openspace.org.

Timeline

Timeline is approximate and is estimated as follows:

Activity	Date
Application period opens	Feb. 11, 2019
Applications due	March 25, 2019
Board of Directors Review	June 26, 2019
Award notification	June 27, 2019
Approximate earliest date project can begin	Sept. 1 2019
Deadline for executed grant agreement	December 2019
Project end date	September 2022, or three years following agreement execution

Selection Process and Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be reviewed by Midpen staff according to the Evaluation Criteria outlined below. Grant awards may be less than the full amount requested in the proposal.

Evaluation Criteria

Sprouts Program (up to \$25,000)

Criteria	Points
Fit with program priorities and overall project impact	30
Project readiness – is the project timeline feasible and is it likely to be completed within the grant performance period?	20
Organizational capacity – does the applicant have demonstrated capacity to take on this type of project and does the organization have a track record for success?	15
Leadership and innovation – is the organization taking the lead in establishing a new methodology, program, or management technique?	5
Additional project characteristics (e.g., multi-benefits)	5
New Midpen Grantee	5
Maximum points	80

Roots Program (up to \$50,000)

Criteria	Points
Fit with program priorities and overall project impact	20
Project readiness – is the project timeline feasible and is it likely to be completed within the grant performance period?	15
Project sustainability after funds are expended - is this project likely to continue after the funding is complete? Has future funding been identified	10
Organizational capacity – does the applicant have demonstrated capacity to take on this type of project and does the organization have a track record for success?	10
Collaboration and partnership - will this project establish new external relationships or deepen existing relationships?	10
Leadership and innovation – is the organization taking the lead in establishing a new methodology, program, or management technique?	5
Additional project characteristics (e.g., multi-benefit project)	5
New Midpen Grantee	5
Total	80

Grant Agreement and Reporting

Invoicing and reimbursement: Funds can be disbursed after a fully executed grant agreement is in place. Midpen will issue payments on a reimbursement basis, barring exceptions for projects with demonstrable need (see below). Reimbursement requests can be submitted as frequently as quarterly but at least annually if reimbursable expenses are accrued.

Advance payments may be considered at the Midpen’s discretion and with demonstrable need. No advance payment shall exceed 25% of the total grant award. Advances must be fully utilized within a six-month period unless additional time is approved by Midpen.

Reimbursement requests must be accompanied by documentation that details the work performed over the reporting period, a budget report that demonstrates which funds are being requested for reimbursement against the fund balance, and appropriate receipts or other necessary [documentation](#).

Loss of funding: The following are examples of actions that may result in loss of funding:

- Grantee fails to obtain a grant agreement;
- Grantee fails to complete the funded project (conform substantially to the agreement);
- Grantee fails to submit all documentation within the time periods specified in the grant agreement;
- Grantee fails to secure CEQA or other necessary project permits;
- Grantee changes the project scope without the concurrence of Midpen; or
- Grantee terminates the project by written notice 30 days in advance.

Reporting: The Grantee is required to keep Midpen apprised of the project's progress throughout the project performance period. Roots Grantees must submit annual reports detailing project progress along with a financial report to describe how the funds were spent based on the budget submitted. Sprouts Grantees will not be required to submit annual narrative reports but will be asked for periodic updates.

Roots Program Grantees should submit an annual narrative report (5 pages or fewer) that includes answers to the following questions:

- List your SMART objectives and progress made against each of the objectives;
- List any other highlights from this period that are important to share (e.g., new opportunities discovered, partnerships developed/deepened);
- Were any anticipated activities or milestone delayed? If so, describe the reason for the delay and how this might impact the project's goals, budget, or timeline;
- Explain any proposed changes to the approach, project, timeline, or budget for the upcoming year; and
- Project budget against total expenditures.

Changes or amendments: Grantees seeking changes to the scope or budget (greater than 10% from a budget category) must obtain Midpen's approval. Changes in project scope must continue to meet the need cited in the original application. Grantee will jeopardize funding should changes be made without prior notice to and approval by Midpen.

Audit and Accountability: Projects are subject to audit annually and for three years following the final payment of grant funds. If the project is selected for audit, Grantee will be contacted in advance. The audit shall include all books, papers, accounts, documents, or other records of Grantee, as they relate to the project. All project expenditure documentation should be available for an audit, whether paid with grant funds or other funds. Grantee must maintain an accounting system that accurately reflects fiscal transactions, with the necessary controls and safeguards to provide an adequate audit trail.

Project Recognition: Grantees will be required to identify the funding source during public announcements relating to the project. Printed or web-based public materials relating to the project should acknowledge Midpen as a funding source. In addition, if the Grantee uses social media, the Grantee should acknowledge the project and Midpen funding at major milestones,

as well as other sources of public outreach, such as newsletters or blog posts whenever possible.

In addition, the Grants Program will prepare an annual report to the Board of Directors on the Grantmaking Program that details the proposals received as well as those selected for funding, and the results of research received. Grantees must be available to present to the Board annually, if requested.

Public announcements relating to the project should be listed in the Grantees annual grant reports to Midpen (Roots Grantees), or in disbursement requests (Sprouts Grantees).

Restrictions: Eligible projects must not result in permanent damage and/or impairment to habitats or natural resources on Midpen lands and will be in compliance with Midpen's Permit to Enter procedures (required for each research project).

Questions and Contact

Research projects are required to consult with Midpen staff prior to application submittal to determine whether faculty sponsorship is required. Other applicants are also encouraged to consult with Midpen staff prior to application submittal.

For questions, please contact Melanie Askay, Grants Specialist, at maskay@openspace.org, or 650-691-6507.

Appendix A – Grant Application

Applicants will select the appropriate funding program (Sprouts Program for proposals requesting \$25,000 or less and Roots Program for proposals requesting between \$25,001 to \$50,000).

Basic Information

- Organization name, address, and tax status
- Contact information
- Applicable funding priority
- Executive summary
- Required documents
 - Project budget that includes other sources of funding, along with a short narrative describing how the funds will be spent.
 - Project workplan that includes a timeline
 - Bios of key members of project team
 - Map of project location (if applicable)
 - Two years of audited financial documents or documented relationship with fiscal sponsor. If audited documents are not available then non-audited financial documents will be accepted.
 - Documentation of relationship with faculty sponsor (if applicable)

Sprouts Program

The proposal narrative should be no more than three pages, with bulleted answers acceptable, and answer the following questions:

- Describe the project, including the purpose, goals, and how it fits into Midpen’s mission and priorities.
- Describe your organization, including the mission and vision. Describe the organization’s capacity to achieve these goals.
- If applicable, list all other organizations that will be involved in the project, including Midpen.
- Describe the expected results and how they will advance the goals set forth by the applicable funding priority.

Roots Program

The proposal narrative should be no more than six pages and include answers to the following questions:

- Describe the project, including the purpose, goals, and how it fits into Midpen’s mission and priorities. Include answers to the following questions:

- How does the program/project fit into the long-term goals of your organization?
 - What makes the program/project well positioned to succeed? What results are you currently achieving in this area?
 - Explain how you will implement the program/project, including key steps/stages, activities, and milestones, the timeline for implementation, and how it will be staffed.
 - If applicable, what partnerships do you have or will you develop to support your effort?
- Describe your organization, including the mission and vision. Describe the organization's capacity to achieve these goals.
 - If applicable, list all other organizations that will be involved in the project, including Midpen.
 - Provide a short, bulleted list of target results for this grant. These should be structured as SMART objectives (specific, measurable, attainable, results-focused, and time-specific).
Note: SMART objectives will form the basis of grant expectations and will be included in the grant agreement and reporting requirements.
 - What challenges do you expect to encounter, and how will you address them?
 - How will you measure the success of your effort? What indicators will you track, what methods will you use, and how will you use/share what you learn?

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Amah Mutsun Land Trust**Celebrating Indigenous Culture Through Education and Stewardship****Request Amount: \$50,000**

This project supports work at the Cultural Conservation Easement on the Mount Umunhum property (Mt. Umunhum) that was granted to the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band (AMTB) in December of 2017. This landmark easement represents a unique learning partnership for not only the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (the District) and members of the AMTB, but also an important outreach tool for the public to see, learn about and experience what ancestral management of this land entailed. The Cultural Conservation Easement for Mt. Umunhum outlines a series of activities to accomplish the purposes of the easement and preserve the unique conservation values of the property. The requested funding will strengthen Amah Mutsun Land Trust's (AMLT) capacity to undertake a selection of these activities, including designing an educational tribal garden, promoting the application and sharing of indigenous land stewardship practices, and providing educational services about traditional cultural and ecological knowledge for tribal members, MRSOD staff, and the public. This work builds on existing conservation efforts at Mt. Umunhum and adds a valuable, tribal-led education and outreach component. This project will support sustained and authentic tribal member access, environmental interpretation, and public and tribal education on the Mt. Umunhum property. Furthermore, it will strengthen existing partnerships between the District and the AMTB and will foster a new partnership between AMLT and the Golden Hour Restoration Institute. By integrating traditional ecological knowledge and contemporary practices in ecosystem restoration, it increases the District's capacity to preserve, protect, restore, and celebrate open-space land in perpetuity. With a focus on promoting cultural resource understanding, environmental stewardship, and meaningful engagement with nature by both tribal members and the broader public, this project is well-aligned with the District's goals of improving access, education, and ecologically sensitive public use and enjoyment on District lands. Proposed education and outreach activities on Mt. Umunhum will reach at least 100 tribal members, at least 100 members of the public, and at least 20 District staff and docents. Specific activities include: environmental stewardship and education volunteer days for the public led by the Native Stewardship Corps; two public story-telling events led by tribal leaders; bringing at least 80 members of the AMTB to the summit to participate in the tribal garden visioning process; training members of the Native Stewardship Corps and District staff to interpret natural and cultural resources on Mt. Umunhum; developing a comprehensive implementation plan and interpretive materials for the Mt. Umunhum tribal garden; and seed collection and invasive species removal.

Bay Area Older Adults**Bay Area Open Space Access Program****Request Amount: \$50,000**

THE PROBLEM: There are currently than 320,000 adults age 60+ in Santa Clara County. Based on census estimates: 50% percent live in poverty and are likely to be sedentary • 20% live alone and are likely to be sedentary • 68% are obese, increasing their risk of diabetes, heart disease and colon cancer • 77% have two or more chronic health conditions **THE SOLUTION:** The CDC and other researchers have proven that lifestyle changes such as regular physical and mental activity and social engagement can reduce the risk of diabetes by 71%, heart disease by

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40% and mortality by 50%. The proposed regional program serves Santa Clara County residents age 60+, a majority of whom are low-income, live alone or are otherwise socially isolated and don't feel safe venturing out in the community alone. This program fulfills our mission to provide educational outdoors physical activity programs that improve older adults' physical and mental health, and social well-being so they can continue independent living and is in strict alignment with MROSD's mission to "provide opportunities for ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education" and offer underserved communities outdoor engagement, nature-based education and environmental stewardship when out on MROSD lands. The program has six important components: 1. Outreach to and engagement with underserved community 2. Transportation to MROSD lands 3. Hiking at MROSD lands 4. Education about nature, culture, history 5. Healthy food and socialization 6. Survey to measure outcomes, data collection and analysis

PAST RESULTS: Bay Area Older Adults has expertise in outreach and engagement of the underserved older adult community. Our online community referral resource provides dedicated informational webpages for each park in Santa Clara and San Mateo County to facilitate park access. This resource is used by 120,000 San Francisco Bay Area seniors and their caregivers each year, and we have grown to more than 5000 members (membership is free) from Alameda, San Mateo and Santa Clara counties. BAO has taken more than 3100 seniors who have walked more than 9400 miles in more than 30 parks in Santa Clara County. Past funded walking programs surpassed goals set for both service levels and outcomes performance on two Santa Clara County, two Open Space Authority, one Santa Clara Valley Water District and one City of San Jose grants. Also, in keeping with MROSD's mission to educate about the parks, a survey of 133 seniors on past BAO hikes indicated that 100% of participants strongly agreed that the hikes increased their knowledge of the nature and history of the parks they visited. Choosing BAO's hiking program will fulfill MROSD's mission to provide opportunities for public enjoyment of and education about MROSD lands. When you consider the results we have achieved with our hiking program, you must conclude that MROSD will get significant benefits in selecting BAO to get older adults to access MROSD lands.

Environmental Volunteers**Request Amount: \$25,000**

PROJECT TITLE Bridging Communities by Caring for a Salt Marsh **PROJECT PURPOSE** This is a new collaborative project between the City of Palo Alto, City of East Palo Alto and Environmental Volunteers designed to bring together the communities of Palo Alto and East Palo Alto in the care and preservation of the marshlands of the Palo Alto Baylands Nature Preserve through the installation of interpretive panels and exhibits along two miles of multi-use trails between the Cooley Landing Education Center and the Lucy Evans Nature Center and on the Evans Center's adjoining boardwalk that extends into the marsh. The proposed multi-sensory, bilingual interpretive panels and interactive exhibits will engage Baylands visitors to learn about the ecology of its salt marsh, how citizens and cities work with local agencies to monitor biological impacts and what steps Bay Area residents can take on their own to protect the marsh.

PROJECT NEED The existing signage along the two mile trail at the Palo Alto Baylands Nature Preserve is limited to 10 information-focused signs only which include: gateway sign (2), trail sign (2), trail marker, building identification, wayfinding sign, traffic sign, regulatory sign and miscellaneous sign. There is a need to reach out to and educate people who come to the Baylands

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but may not choose to visit the two nature centers while there. By building outdoor interpretive experiences in the Baylands to complement the indoor interpretation of the Baylands centers, we will provide multiple points of entry for the very broad range of visitors who come to the Baylands for educational and/or outdoor recreational reasons. **POPULATION SERVED** The project will serve residents in Silicon Valley and East Palo Alto—a combined population of over three million. **PROJECT GOALS** 1. Bring together the communities of Palo Alto and East Palo Alto in the care and preservation of the salt marsh located in the Baylands 2. Help visitors develop an understanding of and appreciation for the Baylands ecosystem 3. Inspire visitors to take action to protect the Baylands **EVALUATION** With input and assistance from Stanford University’s Education Department, we will develop a formative and summative evaluation questionnaire to determine the positive impact of the project. Staff and volunteers will engage trail users to complete the same questionnaire before (formative) and after (summative) the signage/interpretive program is installed. **EXPECTED RESULTS** * Increase in annual visitors to the Baylands * Increase in visitors’ knowledge and appreciation for the Baylands salt marsh * Increase in visitors’ desire to support and protect the Baylands **BUDGET & USE OF FUNDS** The total project cost is \$217,000, of which \$187,000 has already been secured. A grant of \$25,000 from Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District will be utilized to support costs related to design of overall plan, interpretive elements, message development/writing and graphics design.

Golden Hour Restoration Institute**Identifying Restoration Opportunities for Biodiversity and Water Resources****Request Amount: \$9,000**

A critical but often overlooked component of conservation is the management of protected landscapes. Often, landscapes are expansive, variable and in a state of change contributing complexity to decisions about how to spend restricted stewardship dollars. We provide a GIS-driven spatial analysis which allows a specific region (or spatial extent) to be prioritized for restoration. Although many analyses, such as BayAreaLands.org, provide input into reserve design and conservation priorities over a larger landscape, no other analysis distills critical factors to restoration and analyzes a larger landscape in terms of value added from a restoration and stewardship standpoint. Our analysis helps answer the question of “if we could fund restoration, where should we devote our resources and for what outcomes and benefits?” Our analysis combines fine scale metrics on top of a coarser scale number of landscape metrics, including climate, water quality, and reserve design principles. Our analysis utilizes the following input parameters: significant regional vegetation, climate resilience areas, diverse landscape structure areas (vegetation diversity), floodplain mapping, groundwater recharge zones (whole watershed benefits) which are all combined with a heat map of biodiversity and modeled indicator species. Each parameter is weighed and preliminary results are created. These results are then reviewed based on site visits and an on-the-ground assessment of the site. Model parameters are adjusted and the analysis is re-run. A final map of top priority restoration is presented after data is field-validated. The following analysis is an extension of prioritization work underway with the East Bay Regional Park District and the County of Alameda. Each of these analyses are being completed on different scales for different outcomes. Final maps and all non-restricted information will be presented to the District, along with a final report written in semi-

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technical analysis. Project Funding Ask from MidPen: \$9000, or \$6,500 if Tom Robinson's analysis is removed.

Grassroots Ecology**Stulsaft Youth Stewards****Request Amount: \$48,500**

Grassroots Ecology is seeking funding to support our Stulsaft Stewards Program, an outdoor after school program for high school students that we have been running since 2014. The program operates at Stulsaft Park, a 42-acre urban park and nature preserve in Redwood City that is home to rare and endemic native plant species as well as a perennial creek. Stewards learn about the park's diverse ecosystems and participate in hands-on land stewardship activities such as planting native plants, removing invasive weeds, and water quality monitoring on the creek. They also run an educational activity for younger students at Roosevelt Elementary School, and complete a capstone project of their choosing. The program primarily serves students attending Woodside High School in Redwood City, many of whom are part of the school's Green Academy. Under this proposal, we will provide the program for 3 years, with two 10-week sessions each school year (one in fall and one in spring). Approximately 20-35 students have typically participated in the program each session. To meet some of our past stewards, please see this link for a 2-minute video: https://youtu.be/qb_0swu-v2U

Groundswell Coastal Ecology**Teaching Design Thinking for Coastal Resilience****Request Amount: \$49,025**

The resiliency of coastal resources is increasingly threatened by the combined stresses of development, heavy visitorship, and climate change. Land managers are working towards solutions that protect natural resources and promote access while preserving the cultural identity of tight knit coastal communities. This process traditionally engages community through public meetings and comments. However, despite the best of intentions, it often results in alienation local residents. We propose a more holistic approach: Teaching Design Thinking for Coastal Resilience. This educational model works by engaging local youth in design/build for coastal resource protection and enhancement. By educating our next generation in this process, we empower youth as active informed stakeholders and leverage local knowledge for better conservation outcomes. Teaching Design Thinking for Coastal Resilience is a next step for hands-on learning on how to make the ecological and social communities of the Central California coastline more resilient. Here Pescadero High School students will be introduced to the stressors and problems that impact coastal resources. Building on curricula we have implemented with Central Coast schools over the past 5 years, students will learn about methodologies for site assessment and implementation of green infrastructure that can help to increase coastal resiliency. The curricula will include lessons on ecological restoration that teach students about local ecology and the process of coastal restoration. This will kick start an on-campus restoration and youth stewardship program. Following background lessons, students will form small working groups and be guided through the Design Thinking Process to develop their own solutions to coastal resiliency problems. Projects will focus on one of four categories: Engineering Green Infrastructure, Engineering Green-Grey Hybrid Coastlines, Building Social Resilience, or

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Financing Resilience. Students will dialog with a panel of scientists, teachers, land managers, and government. The panel will then review and select top projects. Student authors will present their work to agency partners, County Supervisors and/or at a local Coastal Commission meeting. We will work with agencies and funders to implement components of top-ranking student projects. During this first year we will focus on engaging students on the design and planning of the Tunitas Creek Coastal Access Project. This location has a long history of coastal trashing and poor visitor management. Despite a checkered past, it is rich in natural resources and represents a flagship opportunity for educating you the about coastal resource protection, enhancement, and well-designed public access. Build out of this keystone property is tied to the adjacent MidPen property and future developments will form the basis for public access to surrounding conservation matrix including MidPen lands.

Hidden Villa**Stewardship and Discovery and Action****Request Amount: \$25,000**

Hidden Villa fosters educational experiences that build connections and inspire a deeper appreciation and respect for nature, food, and one another. The school-based environmental education programs for children in pre-K through 12th grade inspire a sense of wonder while promoting environmental stewardship through exploration of our natural world. Over 26,000 young people participate each year and take the Hidden Villa challenge- try something new, take care, and have fun!

La Honda Pescadero Unified School District**Request Amount: \$24,816**

Environmental Service Learning (ESL) at Pescadero High School (PHS) is a curricular program involving a series of field study trips during which students engage in academic and service learning projects, from habitat restoration and trail building to bilingual interpretive app development and field science data collection. This interdisciplinary program will engage at least 40 students per year from our small high school, and perhaps other students from throughout San Mateo County. PHS staff will work with MROSD and other local partners to develop project details by cross-referencing standards-based curricula with the needs and opportunities at particular preserves. The results of our project will be documented in student portfolios and assessments, in work done at MROSD preserves, in open source curricula and bilingual interpretive materials, and in Citizen Science data collection systems. Ideally, this two-year proposal will result in powerful hands-on learning for our students, significant improvements to MROSD preserves, and a catalyst, a prototype for more field studies programs throughout San Mateo County, perhaps even a mobile Outdoor Education program for High School and Community College students to complement the San Mateo County Office of Education's Outdoor Ed. program for 5th & 6th graders. The proposal also serves La Honda Pescadero Unified School Districts mission & vision of using our outstanding local resources and MROSD's mission of providing ecologically sensitive public enjoyment and education.

Latino Outdoors**New Lideres Outdoors**

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Request Amount: \$23,200

In partnership with community-based organizations working with underserved youth, women, and/or seniors, Latino Outdoors (LO) will design, coordinate, and deliver a series of nature-based experiences aimed at building outdoor skills, leadership, and resilience. The goal of this project, New Líderes Outdoors, is to nurture new outdoor recreation leaders from underserved populations by facilitating their knowledge of the outdoor recreation opportunities offered by Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (Midpen) and complementing that knowledge with training in the planning and delivery of outdoor programming. LO expects this project to result in new outdoor leaders with awareness for and understanding of the recreational, educational, and environmental value of Midpen lands and open space protection, in general. These leaders will be representative of underserved communities and will have the opportunity to connect other members of these communities with the outdoors. LO is working to make the outdoors more accessible to members of Latino/a/x and other communities who are underrepresented in this space. Founded in the Bay Area in 2013, LO has grown into a national, volunteer-powered organization that in 2018 delivered over 110 outings for the benefit of 2,000 participants, across thirteen states plus Washington DC, including 11 outings to Midpen lands that achieved 177 total participants.

Marine Science Institute**Discover our Bay and Coast****Request Amount: \$25,000**

Marine Science Institute (MSI) will provide nature- and science-based, hands-on environmental education programs for schools in Northern California. We invite MidPeninsula Regional Open Space District to partner with us to broaden the reach of in-school science education, Discover Our Bay and Coast, and environmental literacy for kindergarten through high school students during the 2019-20 program year. • We are requesting a grant of \$25,000 from MidPen to provide marine science education programs that will build the environmental literacy for 1,000 students. • A minimum of 50% of the programs funded by MidPen in 2019-20 will be delivered to schools with primarily low-income families, as determined by the average number of students in the school who are eligible for the National School Lunch Program's free or reduced-price lunch (FRPL). Within Discover Our Bay programs, students have the opportunity to take a ship out onto the San Francisco Bay, engage in experiments and stewardship projects in the waters surrounding Bair Island, visit and study the tide pools or beach environments with their class, and touch living sharks and other marine creatures. MSI provides these experiences and more, with Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)-aligned curriculum delivered by expert educators that can spark a long-lasting interest in science, nature and environmental stewardship.

Olimpico Learning**Request Amount: \$25,000**

LEARN TODAY, LEAD TOMORROW Olimpico Learning - a 501(c)(3) organization - believes in bringing this opportunity to Bay Area low-income underserved students, from kindergarten to grade 12, by providing high-quality and affordable STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and math) summer camps and school programs to prepare them for success in higher learning and their future careers. We aim to help develop the next generation of researchers in environmental sciences, developers of solutions for environmental issues, and conservationists,

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stewards, and activists who advocate for understanding of our natural environment and appreciation of open space. Environmental sciences play a major role in our summer camp programs. Specifically, we have implemented and delivered classes in Ecology, Meteorology (weather science), Plant & Animal Biology, and Zoology among the 6 existing courses (the other two are Astronomy and Chefology). For 2020, we want to continue offering these camps at an affordable rate for the families, and expand our summer camp curriculum to new topics in the areas of Animation, Hydrology and Oceanography. Studies show that during the summer break, students lose some of the learning gained during the school year. For English learners (approximately 60% of the population we serve) trying to gain English proficiency, this loss poses a double hardship as they work to improve their English and catch up on academic subjects. This situation creates a significant achievement gap, leaving them unprepared for success in high school, college and careers.

Olimpico serves Title 1 schools and teachers by providing professional technological development and curriculum. Students in the elementary school summer camps and the at/after-school programs learn by doing exciting and creative hand-on activities and projects, in a safe and structured environment. Classroom learning is also meant to re-enforce math and language literacy learned during the regular school semesters, and help bring students to state-level standards for their grade level. We include teacher training on new lesson plans and technology when we run our summer camp program. We deliver to the schools our curriculum in the hopes that teachers will continue to teach STEAM-based projects throughout the school year. Our goal is to provide these schools with the experience, skill-set and curriculum needed to independently run our program the following summer. And that been the case in past years. By modeling our organization in this way, we can scale, positively impacting a greater number of underserved youth, further developing the next generation of teachers, and increasing the number of STEAM-based lessons during the school-year. Note1: The 2017 financial document is uploaded to “Map of project location.” Note2: The bio the project lead is a separate doc uploaded to ”Documentation of relationship with faculty sponsor.”

San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory

Outreach Education Expansion

Request Amount: \$25,000

The San Francisco Bay Area is home to a diverse range of plant and animal species. The Bay is also one of the most heavily developed estuaries in the world. Maintaining and restoring a sound ecosystem that serves the needs of people and wildlife requires a carefully-planned effort by qualified people; the application of sound science to land use decision making; and community-wide commitment and support. The San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory (SFBBO) is a nonprofit dedicated to the conservation of birds and their habitats through science and outreach. Since 1981, we have been the local authority on Bay Area birds. We envision a Bay Area of healthy bird populations and ecosystems. We believe the best way to reach that vision is to base resource use decisions on sound science. We understand this can only happen with strong community support. Our Outreach Program builds strong community support for this work by providing educational experiences to Bay Area communities that increase science literacy, appreciation for birds, and understanding about the issues birds face. We engage the public through citizen science

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opportunities as well as a variety of educational events that highlight our avian science and habitat restoration work and share information about the issues birds face and how people can get involved in protecting them. Looking ahead to 2020, we will build upon this success by executing a comprehensive strategy for delivering four of our free outreach event series programs to an audience that better reflects the diversity of our Bay Area communities, and creating metrics to better assess how well we meet our goals of increasing science literacy, appreciation for birds, and an understanding of the issues birds face. In order to do this we would like to hire a part time Outreach Specialist, working under the direction of the Outreach Director, who will focus on these goals. This will meet Midpen's goals of supporting environmental education and interpretation programs that foster an appreciation for open space protection, nature study and appreciation, and environmental stewardship to for under-served communities.

San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory**Restoring Transitional Habitat with Bird Nests****Request Amount: \$24,704**

Transitional habitat between the tidal marsh and adjacent uplands of the San Francisco Bay estuary is important to many endangered and threatened vertebrates. Climate change, specifically the rising sea level, will threaten these species and their persistence in the estuary will depend on the restoration of transitional habitat which provides cover from predators during high tides. Since 2011, the San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory has been a leader in restoring over 20 acres of transitional habitats. A major challenge to creating functional habitat is that all pristine stands of transitional habitat were lost by the early 20th century, leaving us with little understanding of the plant species that formerly occurred in this habitat. To circumvent this problem, we propose an innovative approach which entails identifying plants that were used in 100 year old bird nests collected before transitional habitat was lost. With a molecular approach we can identify plants through DNA analysis that were used in nests of birds formerly nesting in transitional habitat. This will allow some of the more common species to be identified and the habitat to be reconstructed. With support from Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, we will be able confirm a proof-of- concept from subset of nests in museums before applying the approach more broadly across hundreds of nests available from institutions across the United States. Results from this work will help SFBBO and other practitioners improve our ability to restore and create transitional habitat, which will become increasingly valuable to many vulnerable species as climate change progresses.

San Jose Conservation and Charter School**Youth Researchers****Request Amount: \$50,000**

The San Jose Conservation Corps (SJCC), in association with Ecological Concerns Incorporated (ECI), proposes to develop and implement a practitioner science project associated with an educational program focusing on a research project related to habitat restoration on MidPen property. The proposed scientific project is to test the hypothesis that "Installing plants under the canopy of a nurse plant will lead to greater survival and/or growth than installing plants without nurse plant overstory". A "nurse plant" is an existing shrub or tree that provides cover for a seedling that grows nearby. Although this technique has been shown to be effective in many regions around the world, we have seen little evidence of it being

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used on restoration projects on the Central Coast of California. Eighteen at risk youth aged 17 ½ to 27 years old who attend the SJCC Charter School will be offered a paid internship to perform the restoration planting and collect data for the project. Specific training will include: 1. In class training focused on habitat restoration, ecology, and the scientific method 2. In field training on native plant identification, restoration planting, and basic data collection 3. Training in the use of spreadsheets for data analysis and in scientific report writing Students will be expected to write and submit a final report discussing the project, in a scientific format. A final report will be submitted to MidPen written by ECI that summarizes the results of the data collected, along with appropriate analysis of scientific results.

San Mateo County Parks and Recreation Foundation

San Mateo Parks Friends' Groups Environmental Education Collaborative

Request Amount: \$25,000

San Mateo County Parks Foundation is pleased to submit this Sprouts grant application under Midpen's third priority: access, interpretation and education. Parks Foundation is part of a team of environmental education (EE) providers who are working together to enhance EE programming in San Mateo County parks and preserves. This team includes Friends of Edgewood, Friends of Huddart & Wunderlich Parks, and San Mateo County Parks with these advisors: San Mateo County Office of Education, Environmental Volunteers, experienced docents, and local educators. Our project directly supports Midpen's mission and priorities to facilitate opportunities for outdoor engagement and nature-based experiences, especially for underserved communities, and to provide nature-based educational and interpretive experiences for children. The project responds to unprecedented educational reforms underway in our schools to increase environmental literacy and implement Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). This new approach to science education has students engaging in hands-on experiential learning with natural phenomena; for example, turret spiders, dusky-footed woodrats, checkerspot butterflies, redwood understories or serpentine rock formations.

Phenomena bring science to life and support students' investigative, inquiry-based learning. Our goal is to enhance EE programming to be more relevant for students and educators and increase the number and diversity of students who are exposed to nature locally, by focusing on improving training for and helping to expand the pool of specially-trained docents to deliver programming. Activities include: 1) connecting local natural phenomena content to NGSS and to local open space areas, 2) reviewing best practice training materials, 3) developing a docent trail toolkit and docent training materials, and 4) recommending ways to improve and coordinate docent training among EE providers. As a result, we will strengthen and expand EE occurring in local parks and preserves. Our work can be shared with and benefit all EE providers who deliver programming in parks and open spaces. Two new training modules, connected to the NGSS, will be produced to deepen docents' understanding of how to use natural phenomena as a source of inspiration for students' science learning and stewardship. The project will also lay the groundwork for expanding the pool of trained EE docents. We have a tight, cost-effective work plan with a grant request of \$25,000, matched by in-kind contributions from project team and advisor organizations valued at \$23,750. Project team members are committed and engaged. Coming together now is a great opportunity to educate the next generation of environmental stewards and takes advantage of the new push for environmental literacy.

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San Mateo Resource Conservation District**Santa Cruz Mountains Stewardship Network****Request Amount: \$50,000**

The Santa Cruz Mountains Stewardship Network (SCMSN), fiscally sponsored by the San Mateo Resource Conservation District, requests \$50,000 to support network coordination capacity. The SCMSN is a partnership of 22 organizations, including Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, that own, manage, or steward land in the Santa Cruz Mountains. The SCMSN has proved to be an effective mechanism for collaboration between land management organizations, producing formal network projects that address issues like fire, invasive species, climate permitting and so on, and in addition, creating the conditions in which network members self-organize collaborative stewardship projects – over 100 to date. The success of the network requires coordination. In the SCMSN’s case this function takes the shape of a Network Manager. Should the SCMSN receive support from the MROSD Grantmaking Program, the funds will be used for a portion of the Network Manager’s salary over two years. During the grant period, the following objectives will be met: • Design, facilitate, and event plan six convenings over two years • Design, event plan, and moderate eight Salon Conversations over two years • Bring 20-40 participants through Spotlight Stewardship course over two years. • Shepherd Network Atlas Project such that there is a workable draft of the tool by 2021. • Create the capacity to move network projects forward as needed. The success of the network will be assessed on a yearly basis via member-surveys and other mechanisms. The Santa Cruz Mountains Stewardship Network has been a valuable tool for land managers in the region for the last several years. Without the SCMSN, there isn’t another available mechanism to bring the regions land managers together in such a consequential way. We hope you will see the unique opportunity this grant represents to keep the SCMSN providing value for MROSD and the whole region.

San Mateo Resource Conservation District**Lobitos Creek Fish Passage Project****Request Amount: \$50,000**

The Lobitos Creek Fish Passage Restoration Project (Project) will assess, design and develop permit documents for the remediation of two key fish passage barriers located in lower Lobitos Creek watershed, and identify other high priority habitat enhancement and instream flow improvement opportunities. The barriers at Highway 1 and Verde Road crossings have been identified by California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), the San Mateo Resource Conservation District (RCD), and Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MIDPEN) as high priority migration barriers for steelhead trout (CDFW PAD database, Taylor 2004). The goal of the Project is to develop designs and permit documents for the two priority fish passage barriers to restore unrestricted access to approximately 4.5 miles of Lobitos Creek and identify additional instream habitat enhancement and instream flow improvement projects.

Siena Youth Center of St. Francis**Request Amount: \$35,000**

Our program is best qualified for this program because we will be running programs right in the community as a provider through our Siena Youth Center space. Our director of programs, professional development coach and physical education teacher is an integral piece to our

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success. Rafael Avendano will be completing his masters in organizational leadership at the University Of San Francisco in May of 2017. Rafael has been strongly implementing resources for our school and organization to improve. Rafael has a deep connection with civic leaders in the county offices and has been able to get support from county departments that normally would not be available. In addition our program plans to activate our parents with resources and opportunities to continue to be outdoors with our partnership with the San Mateo County Shuttle Hiking bus to Wunderlich and Edgewood Park. With our wilderness first aid certified staff members and volunteers we will continue to provide access and opportunities for our youth and adult community members to be engaged in the great outdoors that our county has to offer. In a recent Visitor Use/Non-Use Study conducted for the San Mateo County in 2016 by San Francisco State professors Turalba, Tierney, Tachibana and March stated, “A multitude of outreach methods and channels were identified by focus group participants. For example, participants recommended building upon existing community resources as a place of outreach. These include schools, churches, and community events and centers. In addition, social media was also identified as a way of reaching communities. Finally, various recommendations were made to address the language and cultural barriers experienced in Spanish speaking communities”(26). Our staff will continue to garner trust to resource and educate our families on the great outdoors in their local neighborhood as well as opportunities.

Thrive Alliance Application**Thrive Alliance E&S TAG****Request Amount: \$50,000**

The Environmental & Sustainability (E&S) Thrive Action Group (TAG) targets leaders in the community to convene once a month to discover and discuss real-time challenges & solutions in the natural resource conservation landscape through the lens of equity and sustainability. Its goal is to identify areas and actions for members to collectively advocate for positive change by harnessing the group’s wisdom and power. Thrive Alliance’s desire is to increase its capacity to attract more attendees and increase the value of each TAG event through additional planning and promotion, and skilled meeting facilitation and follow-up. This additional capacity will lead to stronger member partnerships, collaboration, and community action. Thrive is confident that a moderate increase in staff time and materials can achieve these goals.

University of California, Santa Cruz**Does French broom invasion limit the success of native forbs in annual grasslands?****Request Amount: \$49,375.00**

Most ecologists believe that California grasslands were historically dominated by flowering annual forbs, and grasses were relatively sparse. These native forbs have largely been displaced by exotic annual grasses. The loss of their once-grandiose floral display is one of the most devastating consequences of historical grass invasions in California. The conservation of what remains of these flowering forbs should be given the highest priority. An important conservation challenge is to understand and protect species interactions that are important to the maintenance of native plant diversity. For many native flowering plants in California, pollination is required for reproduction. For these species, a lack of sufficient pollination can limit reproductive success. Pollen limitation may be a factor contributing to the continuing decline of native forb abundance

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and diversity. With the substantial declines seen in bee abundance due to climate change, pathogens, pesticides, and other factors, pollen limitation may be increasing. Invasive species represent an additional threat to native plant reproduction by altering the frequency and effectiveness of animal pollination. Plant-pollinator interactions can be disrupted by exotic plant invasions in several ways. Invasive plants can compete for pollinators if they attract pollinators and reduce the visitation rates of native plants. Invasive plants may also reduce pollen quality and quantity when their pollen finds its way onto pollinators and from there onto the stigmas of native plants. This can reduce the chances of native species receiving adequate conspecific pollen and increase the likelihood of receiving pollen from the wrong species. Some plant species will self-fertilize when there is not sufficient pollen transferred from other plants, which can impact the fitness of the offspring and ultimately the population. French broom is an invasive forb that produces large floral displays and poses a threat to pollination of remnant grassland forbs. In this study we will evaluate both the extent to which native forbs are pollen limited, and whether pollen limitation is exacerbated by the invasion of French broom. To do this, we will use a combination of field and greenhouse studies. First, we will collect baseline information on pollen limitation of native forbs with a pollen supplementation experiment.

Second, we will determine which insects are pollinating French broom and native flowers, addressing the potential for pollinator competition. Third, we will quantify the movement of pollinators from French broom flowers to native flowers, and vice versa; and quantify French broom pollen on native plant stigmas. Finally, we will assess the consequences of French broom pollen deposition on native forb reproduction by measuring seed set. Taken together these studies will determine whether pollen limitation of native plants increases in the presence of French broom.

Vida Verde Education Center**Multi-day Environmental Education Experiences for Students from Low-Income, Bay Area Schools****Request Amount: \$50,000**

Vida Verde's mission is to promote educational equity by providing FREE overnight environmental learning experiences for students who don't otherwise have the opportunity. The organization was founded in 2001 by two former Teach for America classroom teachers who saw a pressing need for youth experiencing poverty to have meaningful educational experiences outside of the classroom. Their original vision has been carefully developed into a highly effective and acclaimed educational program. Now in its 18th year, Vida Verde has provided our core program for over 11,500 students and teachers from low-income Bay Area schools. At least 750 students in fourth through sixth grades take part in our programs each school year. Vida Verde students travel to our site from throughout the San Francisco Bay Area. 99% of the students are youth of color, over 85% qualify for free/reduced-price lunch programs in their schools, and none of them would otherwise get the chance to participate in outdoor education programs. Each class trip during the school year is an activity-packed experience that takes place at our 100-acre camp and farm and at state parks and beaches along the San Mateo County coastline. Students stay busy and engaged with dozens of hands-on activities, from milking a goat and using that milk to make fresh cheese, to exploring tide pools and playing tag with the waves, to hiking through redwoods and discovering the incredible animals and plants thriving in that ecosystem! To ensure that the

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students succeed, the trip is carefully structured with eye-opening, fun activities coupled with clear and attainable expectations, consistency, and opportunities to recognize and reflect upon successes. With this foundation in place, the program is a vehicle through which we achieve our overarching goal: to positively and powerfully impact our students' academic performance, social and emotional learning, and connection to the outdoors. Vida Verde's SLP launched with a pilot project in summer of 2018 to serve high school aged alumni of our core school year program. In the pilot year, we served 9 students. In summer of 2019, our goal is to serve two cohorts of 15 students (30 students total). As the program grows, rather than focusing solely on increasing numbers for greatest impact, we will focus on slow growth and on providing an excellent and highly impactful experience for each and every student. Vida Verde has a proven track record of achieving remarkable results with students from low-income schools through our high-quality and mission-driven outdoor education program coupled with strong organizational effectiveness and smart financial planning. We look forward to a continued and growing relationship with Midpen if we are awarded this grant, and we hope to learn of new ways we can further collaborate.

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Recommended Organization	Funding Priority	Program	Total Request	Recommended Funding	Proposal Scoring Percentage
Environmental Volunteers	Education	Sprouts	\$25,000	\$25,000	81%
Groundswell Coastal Ecology	Education	Roots	\$49,025	\$49,025	85%
San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory - Applied Science	Applied Science	Sprouts	\$24,704	\$24,704	76%
San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory - Education, Interpretation, Access	Education	Sprouts	\$25,000	\$25,000	76%
Thrive Alliance	Partnership	Roots	\$50,000	\$25,000	81%
University of California, Santa Cruz	Applied Science	Roots	\$49,375	\$49,375	76%
Vida Verde Education Center	Education	Roots	\$50,000	\$50,000	88%
Total			\$273,104	\$248,104	
Additional Received Applications	Funding Priority	Program	Total Request	Recommended Funding	Proposal Scoring Percentage
Amah Mutsun Land Trust	Education	Roots	\$50,000	N/A	64%
Bay Area Older Adults	Education	Roots	\$50,000	Contract	70%
Golden Hour Restoration Institute	Applied Science	Sprouts	\$9,000	N/A	64%
Grassroots Ecology	Education	Roots	\$48,500	N/A	67%
Hidden Villa	Education	Sprouts	\$25,000	N/A	46%
La Honda Pescadero Unified School District	Education	Sprouts	\$24,816	N/A	45%
Latino Outdoors	Education	Sprouts	\$23,200	N/A	66%
Marine Science Institute	Education	Sprouts	\$25,000	N/A	67%
Olimpico Learning	Education	Sprouts	\$25,000	N/A	61%
San Jose Conservation and Charter School	Applied Science	Roots	\$49,890	N/A	68%
San Mateo County Parks and Recreation Foundation	Education	Sprouts	\$25,000	N/A	68%
San Mateo Resource Conservation District - Lobitos Creek Fish Passage	Applied Science	Roots	\$49,343	N/A	56%

San Mateo Resource Conservation District -					84%
Santa Cruz Mountain Stewardship Network	Partnership	Roots	\$50,000	Contract	
Siena Youth Center of St. Francis	Education	Roots	\$35,000	N/A	63%
Total			\$489,749		