

**Partnership Request to Support American River Basin Regional Adopt-A-Creek (AAC) Program, ARB Storm Water Resource Plan Implementation and the American River Basin Collaborative (ARBC) for Watersheds**

**Budget Goal: \$160,000 over two years** - \$133,000 will support Valley Foothill Watersheds Collaborative (VFWC) activities to develop and implement ongoing regional “Adopt A Creek” (AAC) programs that conduct monthly/quarterly events as well as annual clean ups within the American River Basin and \$27,000 will support coordination of regular meetings for the American River Basin Collaborative (ARBC) as a replicable program for California.

**Partnership Request \$25,000 to \$100,000:** Commitment over 2 years

**Valley Foothill Watersheds Collaborative (VFWC) Background:**

VFWC formed a 501C3 in December 2017 after being developed as a program of Dry Creek Conservancy (DCC) between 2013 and 2017. VFWC started as a steering committee founded by Dry Creek Conservancy, Sacramento Area Creeks Council (SACC), and Launa Creek Watershed Council (LCWC) based on a need to collaborate and share resources and best practices to leverage limited resources within the American River Basin. As a program of DCC, VFWC representative staff have been part of regional planning process and grant implementation as part of the process to establish VFWC as an independent self-supporting regional non-profit.

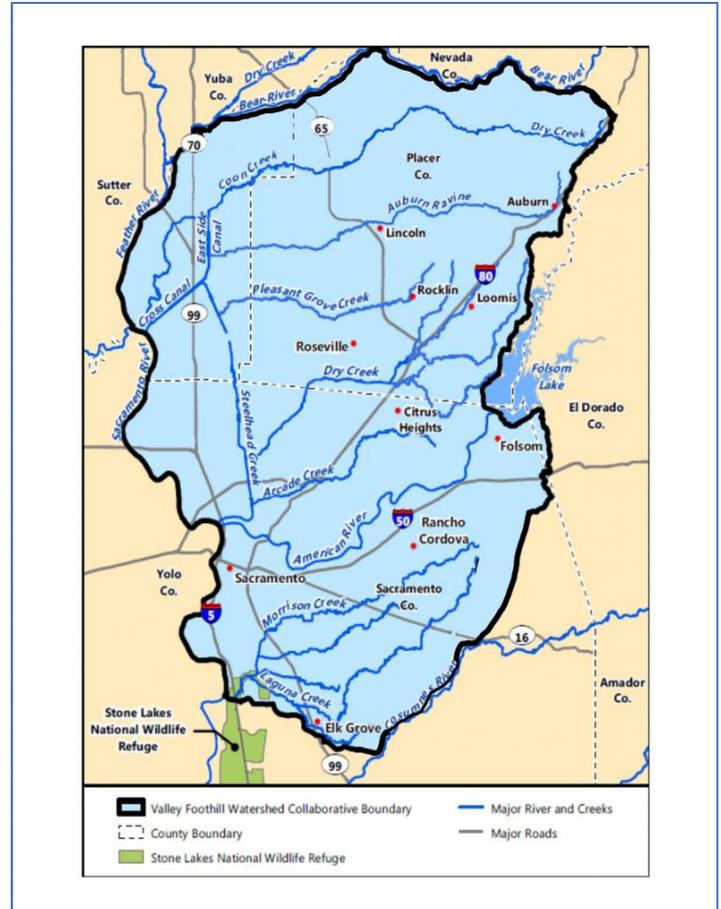
For the years 2015, 2016, and 2017 DCC has funded the DCC executive Director and VFWC Program Manager in the amount of approximately \$200,000 and expects to spend about \$100,000 developing VFWC in 2018. Development of projects such as the American River Basin Storm Water Resource Plan and the Update of the American River Basin Integrated Water Management Plan are expected to provide income of about \$60,000 in 2018.

In addition, VFWC is leveraging in-kind staff contributions as well grant funded projects with multiple entities including other NGOs, private sector, local government agencies, regional water and stormwater agencies as well as state and federal agencies. Current partnership commitments for VFWC activities and programs include: DCC, SACC, City of Roseville AAC Contract, CA Naturalist Course, ARBC co-hosted by the Regional Water Authority, and the Morrison Creek Revitalization Project which includes the City of Sacramento, National Parks Service (NPS) Rivers and Trails Technical Assistance Program, CA Department of Water Resources, Environmental Justice Coalition for Water and CBEC Eco Engineering. Additionally, VFWC has an MOU with CSU Sacramento Center for Community Engagement as an approved organization to provide internship and volunteer opportunities. VFWC is a partner with Keep California Beautiful (KCB) and Caltrans on programs and outreach through the Protect Every Drop Campaign and Caltrans’ Annual Litter Cleanup Day. As an NGO partner with KCB, VFWC will be able to leverage resources including KCB’s integrated intelligent social media management system as it is developed.

## Challenges in the American River Basin:

The American River Basin (ARB) is a region encompassing Sacramento County and the lower watershed portions of Placer and El Dorado counties. It includes numerous political subdivision boundaries, watershed boundaries, groundwater subbasin boundaries, groundwater sustainability agency boundaries, stormwater/floodwater management agency boundaries, water agency boundaries, and wastewater agency jurisdictional boundaries. The population of the region continues to increase for many reasons including economic opportunities, available affordable housing, quality of life, and recreational opportunities. The three-county region had over 2 million residents in 2017.

The ARB region has historically supported agriculture. The City of Sacramento, located at the confluence of the American and Sacramento rivers, has served as the regional hub since the gold rush era and the State Capital since 1879. Over the past several decades, urban and residential development have spread from the City of Sacramento proper outward—upstream and easterly along the American River toward Folsom and El Dorado Hills; as well as north into the Natomas Basin and western Placer County, and south along Interstate 5 and Highway 99 through the City of Elk Grove (Elk Grove) toward the City of Galt (Galt).<sup>1</sup>



With changes in regulations related to storm water management and the 2015 Trash Amendments from the [State Water Resources Control Board](#) (SWRCB)<sup>2</sup>, the American River Basin (ARB) Region has developed a draft Storm Water Resource Management Plan (ARB SWRP) which includes support of multi-benefit projects, restoration projects, institutional controls such as education, outreach, and litter collection as allowed in implementation of the plan to manage storm water as a resource regionally.

This is also interconnected with the [Regional Water Authority](#) updating the Integrated Regional Water Management Plan, as required by the [California Department of Water Resources](#) (DWR), and with the development of [Ground Water Management Plans](#) also required by DWR within the ARB. [Valley Foothill Watersheds Collaborative](#) (VFWC) hosted a one-day conference in March 2018 with the SWRCB and [CSU Sacramento Office of Water Programs](#) (OWP) entitled [6<sup>th</sup> American River Basin Low Impact Development Conference; Planning Multi-Benefit Projects for Watershed Health](#), which provided a theme and context for viewing our basin holistically as a step toward developing regional watershed planning.

Additional factors that influence the water quality of our streams is the increase in unsheltered homeless living along the streams which feed into the American River as well as the increase in illegal

<sup>1</sup> Summary descriptions above is from the ARB IRWMP

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/trash\\_control/documentation.shtml](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/trash_control/documentation.shtml)

dumping on public right of ways within the City and County of Sacramento. VFWC collaborative has begun working with stakeholders to monitor environmental impacts in Steelhead Creek as well provide services to help with inactive homeless camp cleanups in the City of Roseville. Recently the Sacramento Solid Waste Authority (SWA) commissioned a [study on Illegal Dumping](#) and approved several recommendations including working with organizations like Keep America Beautiful and Keep California Beautiful (KCB) to deliver education and awareness; campaigns and facilitating community clean-ups. VFWC and SACC are currently partnered with KCB and their Campus Affiliate, CSUS SacState Sustainability.

VFWC has presented local program successes and efforts at the 2017 California Resource Recovery Association Conference and the 2018 6<sup>th</sup> International Marine Debris Conference illustrating the ties between water quality, waste management (including litter, illegal dumping, homeless encampments) and how volunteers are part of the solution and implementation of projects.

### **Need for Funding:**

VFWC is requesting support to develop ongoing “Adopt A Creek” programs and partnerships with local governments for stormwater permit compliance, to manage implementation of the ARB SWRP, participate in statewide stakeholder groups such as [California Stormwater Quality Association](#) and projects including the [California Trash monitoring Methods Project](#) and to convene a regular regional collaborative stakeholder meeting.

#### *Organizing Adopt A Creek Programs*

As local governments are developing their individual stormwater implementation plans in the ARB region all but one agency (the City of Galt) are using the “Track Two” option which includes institutional controls instead of implementing full capture devices in all storm drains to comply with the “trash amendments.” Adopt A Creek programs which include ongoing systematic data collection, litter/trash collection, education and outreach are a program component that can be implemented as part of the planned permit compliance. These programs could also include Adopt a Street and Adopt a Drain programs. City staff have limited time and resources to recruit and oversee volunteers. The areas that need to be cleaned up and monitored are a combination of governmental agency owned and privately-owned property throughout jurisdictions of the ARB, therefore a non-profit is better suited to be the lead organization for coordination and implementation in partnership with agencies who can provide in-kind resources, staffing, waste disposal, supplies etc. Trash removal is a key goal of the SWRCB and citizen volunteers are an important strategy to help local jurisdictions comply with requirements in a cost-effective way resulting in improved management of the region’s natural areas. As part of this project it is important that VFWC communicate with NGOs in other areas of the state who are doing similar work as well as participate in larger regional and statewide projects related to data collection and citizen science as it pertains to stormwater quality. New protocols and methods are being developed and evaluated through the California Trash Monitoring

#### *Storm Water Resource Plan Management*

A regular review and update of the ARB SWRP is needed to assure that projects are updated, to evaluate the plan’s effectiveness, to assist with supporting current projects and identifying new projects, and to develop grant applications for project implementation. American River Basin Collaborative (ARBC) for watersheds will be a regular meeting that aims to connect local agencies, special districts, nonprofits and the public sector to coordinate projects that have been identified by them to improve water quality and supply, flood water management, as well as ecological health of local watersheds. The Regional

Water Authority has committed meeting space as in-kind support for this ongoing effort. ARBC is successor of a meeting convened by DCC known as the American Basin Council of Watersheds (ABCW) stakeholder group that was formed to maximize the benefits from collaborative efforts and to minimize duplication and competition that result from uncoordinated efforts. DCC and ABCW have a history of collaboration and cooperation with numerous local governments, state and federal agencies, special districts, nonprofits and other organizations. ABCW has met monthly from 1996 for information sharing, networking and developing collaborative projects<sup>3</sup>. By the early 2000's ABCW collaborators had raised over \$ 6 million for watershed projects through grants, contributions from members, and DCC contributions. This pattern of collaboration has continued to the present as ARBC is forming to bring the collaborative approach to the greater Sacramento area.

### **Building on Current Adopt A Creek (AAC) Programs:**

The City of Roseville, in Placer County, is the only local government with a formal [Adopt-A-Creek](#) Program in the ARB and they have contracted with [Dry Creek Conservancy](#) to implement the program, through hosting 6 dedicated events annually. [Sacramento Area Creeks Council](#), hosts an annual county wide creek cleanup/restoration day in Sacramento County called [Creek Week](#). This project has been ongoing for 28 years and supports over 90 locations being cleaned up/restored each spring and has ongoing support from CalRecycle, CalTrans, City of Sacramento and County of Sacramento public works departments and stormwater programs. [Mira Loma High School IB Program Arcade Creek Project](#) is a program established in 1989 to gather data and manage the riparian corridor of Arcade Creek while informing students of the importance of creeks as a resource for urbanized areas. These programs are models for the ARB region and could be expanded with support from the private sector. Adopt-A-Creek (AAC) Programs include trash cleanup, litter data collection, restoration projects such as invasive removal, stream bank stabilization, vehicle exclusion, re-oaking/tree plantings and other similar projects that improve the water quality and restore functional habitat. These programs have been supported by storm water programs, waste management programs, and parks departments from various jurisdictions as well as donations from the business community.

The City of Sacramento is coordinating efforts with VFWC and has begun working on it baseline trash assessments and are hiring paid interns through CSU Sacramento in December 2018 to help complete them in January 2019. They have budgeted \$8,500 for four interns to complete the assessments using tablets to record their assessment of litter levels along streets, determining sources of litter and recommending solutions. This will be completed by March 2019. The intent is to provide a pilot program that is replicable and has measurable results that can be expanded City wide. As part of the program VFWC will also work with CSUS and the local school districts to expand student engagement in conducting the walkable litter audits, clean-up activities and prevention programs as part of complying with state mandated storm water permits. Not only do the local judications' have their own permit requirements, the local school districts will be under the MS4 permit beginning in 2019 and CSUS has its own permit.

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<sup>3</sup> Monthly meetings were suspended during the development of the ARB SWRP and the decision has been made to broaden the stakeholder group.

With private and foundation funding support to engage local governments in public private partnerships, VFWC, working with its partner non-profits, would provide AAC program services for agency partners with a goal of developing a minimum of three new AAC local agency partnership projects during the first two years and expanding existing AAC partnership programs.

**Target Partnerships:**

- Local Agencies: Placer County: Roseville, Lincoln, Rocklin, Loomis and Placer County; Sacramento County: City of Citrus Heights, City of Folsom, City of Sacramento, City of Rancho Cordova, City of Elk Grove, Sacramento County, Sacramento Storm Water Quality Partnership, Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency, and Regional Water Authority.
- State Agencies: CA Department of Water Resources, CA State Water Resources Control Board, Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board, State Conservation Corp, CA Fish and Wildlife, CalRecycle, Caltrans and Caltrans' Protect Every Drop Campaign.
- Non-Profit/Education: Sacramento Area Creeks Council, Dry Creek Conservancy, Laguna Creek Watershed Council, Friends of Auburn Ravine, American River Parkway Foundation, Mira Loma High School IB Program Arcade Creek Project, UC California Naturalist Program, CSU Sacramento-SacState Sustainability, Keep California Beautiful, Trout Unlimited, ECOS, Sierra Club, and Sacramento Conservation Corp,
- Private Sector: Local Water Companies, Waste Management Companies, Construction/Engineering, Fast Food and Convenience Stores; Retailers, Developers; Property Managers; etc.

**Convening ARBC for Regional Collaboration and managing the ARB SWRP:**

VFWC will host regular meetings (bi-monthly) in partnership with Regional Water Authority (RWA) connecting local agencies, special districts, nonprofits and the public sector to coordinate projects identified by them to improve water quality and supply, flood water management, as well as ecological health of local watersheds. It will work with organizations from different sectors such as air quality, transportation, and housing to incorporate multiple benefits into projects that have been focused on a single benefit. It will also work with other regional efforts focused on a single issue such as Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG), ARB SWRP, habitat conservation plans, urban forest plans, storm water permitting, and groundwater agencies.

ARBC meetings will also provide a forum for discussing implementation and maintenance of the SWRP.