

RECEIVED

NOV 13 2017

MPWMD

Louis Trevino  
2087 Delaware Street #5  
Berkeley, CA 94709

November 13, 2017

Monterey Peninsula Water Management District, Board of Directors  
P.O. Box 85  
Monterey, CA 93942

To the Board of Directors of the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District:

I am writing to emphasize the need for the protection of an important natural and cultural resource present at the site of the Rancho San Carlos Road Streambank Stabilization Project – a sedge bed of the species *Carex barbarae*. I am a member of the Rumsen Ohlone community, active in the revitalization of our Rumsen language, our culinary traditions alongside my partner Vincent Medina (Chochenyo Ohlone), and other cultural practices. We are the indigenous people of the Carmel Valley and Monterey area. This species of sedge is called **xuyxuy** in our Rumsen language, and is central to our traditional art of basketry. Its presence at the site in question demands special consideration.

**xuyxuy** is vital to the creation of our baskets. The root of this sedge was cultivated by our people from before in the making of utilitarian, ornamental, and ceremonial baskets, and is still tended to by members of our community so that the traditional art of our basketry can be practiced today and will continue into the future. The continuity of our basketry cannot be taken for granted, just as the **xuyxuy** cannot be taken for granted. The revitalization of our art of basketry has been undertaken for more than three decades by Linda Yamane, a Rumsen Ohlone leader who lives in Seaside. For years, she carefully researched (and continues to research) ethnographic notes and visited some of the small number of extant old Ohlone baskets in order to understand our specific basketry materials, techniques, and designs – and then she put that knowledge into practice. In the process, she has identified significant cultural plants, developing a close relationship with our homeland as she quietly tends to willows, bracken ferns, and

the sedge bed that will be affected by the Rancho San Carlos Road Streambank Stabilization Project. By her weaving, Linda is mending our material link to our old people, giving physical form to the words given to ethnographers, anthropologists, and linguists by elders who remembered these things. Her baskets honor our people from before, and allow us today to not only know about, but also to experience the beauty of our culture. The health and persistence of the sedge bed along the streambank is crucial to the continuity of that invaluable work.

Generations of Rumsen Ohlone people to come deserve the opportunity to tend to and use the sedge bed at the streambank for baskets. The loss of this precious resource would be a terrible blow to the cultural revitalization so hard-fought for by my predecessors; it would inhibit not only my own process of learning our basketry, but that of countless others including those yet to come. Our baskets, from the utilitarian waršin (winnowing basket) and šiiwen (burden basket) to the ornamental and ceremonial tuupen (ear sticks of incised bone with feathered basketry ornamentation) and missix tiprin ('beautiful baskets,' feathered baskets adorned with carefully made olivella disc beads), are foundations of our material culture. Each of these basket types requires the sedge root, and so without the bed at the streambank, which is a sedge bed certainly used by our direct ancestors, they will not be possible to make in the same way in the future.

I thank you for considering the great importance of the sedge bed present at the site to be affected by the Rancho San Carlos Road Streambank Stabilization Project, for empathizing with our need of that plant as we continue to live and practice our cultural ways, and for protecting the sedge bed as the streambank is stabilized.

šuururu xuyxuytk (blessings on the xuyxuy place, the home of the sedge bed),

Louis Trevino