RESOLUTION - ACTION REQUESTED 2020-187

MEETING: April 14, 2020

TO: The Board of Supervisors

FROM: Sarah Williams, Planning Director

RE: Pollinator Habitat Enhancement

RECOMMENDATION AND JUSTIFICATION:

Approve a Letter of Support for the Mariposa County Resource Conservation District’s Submittal of an Application to the 2020 National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Monarch Butterfly and Pollinators Conservation Fund Grant Opportunity; and Authorize the Board of Supervisors Chair to Sign the Letter.

This project aims to implement a native pollinator restoration program on current parks and recreation sites throughout Mariposa County. The grant, for which Mariposa County RCD is the applicant, would support installation and maintenance of strategic native plants, especially milkweeds, that are crucial for sustaining native pollinator species like the Monarch Butterfly. In addition to being an iconic part of local history and identity, these and other pollinators are important, if threatened, components to healthy ecosystems in the Sierra foothill and central valley. Working closely with the University of California Master Gardeners/Mariposa County, species will be selected from the approved Calflora list for the site, and may include ferns like Coville’s lip fern (Cheilanthes covillei), perennial herbs like California fuchsia (Epilobium canum), annual herbs like chick lupine (Lupinus microcarpus), and shrubs like California juniper (Juniperus californica) and Sierra plum (Prunus subcordata). The project may consider appropriate trees like California sycamore (Platanus racemosa) and California black oak (Quercus kelloggii) if appropriate. These and similar species have been identified for their habitat value for pollinators like honey bees, butterflies, and generalists such as moths and beetles.

Additionally, the project approach includes opportunities for interpretation and environmental education concerning both the value of pollinator conservation, and techniques for implementing it on other sites in Mariposa County. This is a primary benefit of locating this project’s enhancements in public areas, where visitor traffic helps expose Mariposans to enhanced landscapes, interpretive materials, and the pollinators themselves.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY OF BOARD ACTIONS:
Resolution - Action Requested 2020-187

On April 16, 2019, the Board adopted RES-2019-204, which authorized the submittal of an application to the 2019 California Department of Food and Agriculture Noxious Weed Grant Program. This grant, which was not awarded, would have supported removal of invasive species and revegetation of pollinator-oriented species in the Mariposa Creek Parkway.

ALTERNATIVES AND CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION:

Alternatives would include changing the text in the support letter.

Failure to approve this action will mean Mariposa County’s support letter will not be included in RCD’s grant application.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:
None as grant will be managed by RCD

ATTACHMENTS:
LOS_Cann (1) (DOCX)

RESULT:   ADOPTED BY CONSENT VOTE [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:   Marshall Long, District III Supervisor
SECONDER: Miles Menetrey, District V Supervisor
AYES: Smallcombe, Jones, Long, Cann, Menetrey
April 14, 2020

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
1133 Fifteenth St., N.W., Suite 1000
Washington, DC 20005

To whom it may concern:

On behalf of the Mariposa County Board of Supervisors, I am writing to offer my support for the Mariposa County Resource Conservation District’s application to the 2020 Monarch Butterfly and Pollinators Conservation Fund grant program. This opportunity will enhance the biodiversity of our community, the Sierra Foothills, and the eastern portions of California's Central Valley, while supporting local environmental stewardship and creative placemaking objectives. I am excited to be involved in the project.

The Countywide Pollinator Restoration and Enhancement Project leverages longstanding investments in public open space to promote pollinator health throughout Mariposa County. By locating pollinator enhancements in county parks and recreation areas, this effort both disperses pollinator habitat throughout a variety of distinct ecosystems and landscapes. As well, it targets habitat expansion in areas with appropriate levels of human interaction, establishing significant opportunities to connect people with pollinators and educate the public on the value of, and strategies for, conserving pollinators elsewhere.

By encouraging community engagement with pollinator habitat restoration, this project will contribute to an existing culture of stewardship and celebration of these essential native species. As you know, our county was originally named by Spanish explorers who were enchanted by the incredible abundance of butterflies, including monarchs that they encountered here. For countless Mariposas, this remains a great source of local pride and identity, and we are passionate about restoring our natural environment to its historic condition. As a tool to enhance our landscape, promote environmental education and stewardship, and as an arena for community enrichment, this project will address a range of critical objectives in our rural community.

This grant will tangibly and significantly advance a project that will enhance Mariposa County’s natural and cultural environments. It will enhance local and regional ecology, promoting education and action around pollinator conservation while contributing to our community’s unique sense of place. We endorse this application, and are committed to participating in all phases of this project.

Sincerely,

Kevin Cann
Chair, Mariposa County Board of Supervisors
Mariposa County Supervisor; District IV