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**From:** Mark Strudley <[Mark.Strudley@santacruzcounty.us](mailto:Mark.Strudley@santacruzcounty.us)>  
**Sent:** Friday, December 3, 2021 11:03:55 AM (UTC-08:00) Pacific Time (US & Canada)  
**To:** CNRA COPC Public <[COPCPublic@resources.ca.gov](mailto:COPCPublic@resources.ca.gov)>  
**Cc:** 'Jackie McCloud' <[jackie.mccloud@cityofwatsonville.org](mailto:jackie.mccloud@cityofwatsonville.org)>  
**Subject:** Public Comments in support of Middle Struve Slough Water Quality and Habitat Enhancement Project

Good morning Ocean Protection Council:

I am writing to you this morning regarding Item 4d on the December 7, 2021 agenda, to voice support for the approval of disbursement of Prop 1 funds for the Middle Struve Slough Water Quality and Habitat Improvement Project. This support is provided on behalf of three local agency partners to the City of Watsonville, who work locally together with the City on important habitat enhancement and flood risk reduction projects in the lower Pajaro Valley: the Pajaro Regional Flood Management Agency, the Santa Cruz County Flood Control and Water Conservation District – Zone 7, and the Pajaro Storm Drain Maintenance District.

The Middle Struve Slough project is a very important component of a comprehensive set of efforts conducted by the agencies mentioned above and the City of Watsonville, which together seek to provide water quality protection, habitat enhancement, recreational access, and protection of coastal wetlands and riverine areas of the Pajaro Valley. This project will use creative and meaningful community engagement strategies that will provide targeted benefits to those who will be disproportionately affected and are most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Project implementation will result in improved and safe public access to coastal natural resources for Watsonville residents, will improve surface water quality, and provide a high quality demonstration project that integrates meaningful community engagement and watershed and stormwater enhancement in a way that is replicable throughout Coastal California. The project will also utilize an extensive effort to encourage diverse community participation throughout the implementation process and will emphasize youth participation and paid internships for Watsonville area youth in a way that recognizes the value of their participation.

I urge you to support the proposed use of Prop 1 funds for the Middle Struve Slough project. We are enthusiastically supportive, and look forward to supporting the City of Watsonville with this project in any way that we can. In lieu of providing oral comments at the meeting in person, which we unfortunately cannot attend, please accept these comments as part of the written record in support of Item 4d for the December 7<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting.

Thank you and have a great holiday season,  
Mark Strudley



**Mark Strudley, Ph.D**

Executive Director (Interim)  
Pajaro Regional Flood Management  
Agency

Flood Control Division Manager  
Santa Cruz County Department of Public  
Works  
Santa Cruz County Flood Control and  
Water Conservation District, Zone No. 7

**Phone:** 831-454-2807

**Mobile:** 831-201-2778

**Email:** [mark.strudley@santacruzcounty.us](mailto:mark.strudley@santacruzcounty.us)

701 Ocean Street, Rm. 410  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

[www.prfma.org](http://www.prfma.org)