

## M E M O

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Betsy Herbert, Ph.D.

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS STATUS REPORT  
WEEK ENDING February 12, 2009

DATE: February 11, 2009

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the Board of Directors review and file the Environmental Programs Status Report for the week ending February 12, 2009.

### **BACKGROUND:**

#### CLIMATE CHANGE

Staff will present at a February 27, 2009 public forum in Los Angeles entitled, "Climate Change and Water - Examining the scale of the problem, and environmental leadership solutions at global, national and local scales." The forum is sponsored by the Robert and Patricia Switzer Foundation, the Environmental Leadership Program and the Farmlab Public Salon Series.

#### SALMONID RESTORATION CONFERENCE

At the January 15, 2009 board meeting, your board approved a funding level of up to \$1,500 to co-sponsor the annual Salmonid Restoration Conference, March 4-7, at the Santa Cruz Civic Auditorium. Staff negotiated a funding level of \$1,250. Included is registration for 4 board members and 1 staff person for the Friday, March 6 and Saturday, March 7, 2009 plenary sessions, the Saturday evening banquet, a poster session, and conference proceedings.

Staff will complete the conference registrations for board members by February 13, 2009, including any additional workshops or field tours selected by board members by that date.

#### WATERSHED PLAN

In December 2008, staff distributed a revised draft of the District's Existing Conditions Report to the Environmental Committee with known data gaps identified. The draft is scheduled for discussion and review at the next Environmental Committee meeting on February 19, 2009 at 9:00 p.m.

## EDUCATION PROGRAM GRANTS

Staff scheduled a meeting on March 4, 2009 with the Education Program Advisory Commission to discuss the 2009 funding cycle of the grant program. Staff will compile a list of potential projects, designed to address some of the data gaps identified in the Existing Conditions Report, for grant applicants to consider in their applications. These projects would not preclude an applicant's project ideas, but rather, would offer applicants additional options.

At the time of the February 6, 2009 deadline for science fair grant applications, staff received one application for funding of a science fair project. That project is under review and the applicant has expressed interest in meeting with staff to discuss the project.

## OLYMPIA WATERSHED

Volunteer acacia eradication workdays have continued on the District's Olympia watershed property. The project is overseen by staff and invasive species expert Ken Moore.

## WATERSHED ACADEMY

Staff has been invited to and plans to attend the Watershed Academy Science Fair Poster Review Session, Monday March 2nd at San Lorenzo Valley High School Science Department.

Staff has been invited to and plans to attend a meeting of the Watershed Academy Advisory Committee at San Lorenzo Valley High School on February 19, 2009.

## MOUNTAIN LION TRACKING PROJECT

Staff met with Paul Houghtaling, a UCSC researcher working on the Santa Cruz Mountains Mountain Lion Tracking project, sponsored by Chris Willmers, Professor, Environmental Studies. Researchers have tracked a collared mountain lion on District property on Ben Lomond Mountain and are seeking permission to use District lands as part of their research.

## WATER CONSERVATION

Staff is discussing co-funding and participation in the GardenSoft Project, in partnership with other local water agencies. The project would tailor computer software that displays use of drought tolerant plants that are successfully used in this area.

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Betsy Herbert, Ph.D.  
Environmental Analyst