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## **\$3.872 MILLION FOR DROUGHT RELIEF FOR FARMS, FISH, AND PEOPLE**

(Half Moon Bay, CA- November 4, 2014) The California Department of Water Resources awarded a grant of \$3.872 million today to the San Mateo County Resource Conservation District (RCD) to provide drought relief for the south coast area of San Mateo County, including the communities of San Gregorio, La Honda, Loma Mar, and Pescadero.\* The grant was awarded for a collaborative effort of the RCD and its partners at Trout Unlimited, American Rivers, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, and San Mateo County to conduct a suite of drought relief projects across the south coast landscape.

This ambitious effort will improve water use efficiency and build local water storage to make better use of limited water resources, providing more reliable supply for domestic and agricultural uses as well as ensuring more water in local creeks for threatened steelhead trout and endangered coho salmon.

The collaboration will:

- Help farmers conserve, strategically manage, and store water.
- Fix significant drinking water supply system leaks and broken pipes.
- Improve water pumping, delivery, and storage facilities.
- Coordinate water users in some areas to minimize the likelihood of people running out of water and develop an emergency plan of action in the event that they do.

The water use, infrastructure, and water management improvements that are part of this project will result in an estimated combined total of 6.55 million gallons per year of additional local water storage capacity and 51 million gallons per year of reduced water demand.

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\* In January, 2014 Governor Brown proclaimed a Drought State of Emergency and signed legislation in March to assist drought-affected communities. The Governor and Legislature then directed the Department of Water Resources to award \$200 million in Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) funding to support projects and programs in California that help alleviate drought conditions and improve regional drought preparedness. The grant to the RCD was part of a \$28 million proposal of the Bay Area Integrated Regional Water Management Plan to the \$200 million fund.

San Mateo County Supervisor Don Horsley noted, “This award highlights the significance of San Mateo County’s rural area and the importance of protecting its communities in the face of a dangerous drought. I am grateful to the California Department of Water Resources for recognizing the effective collaborative efforts of the Resource Conservation District, Trout Unlimited, American Rivers and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. Now we will be able to address some of the water challenges in our smaller communities in the southern part of San Mateo County.”

Kellyx Nelson, Executive Director of the RCD, explained “This is an area without snowpack, major municipal reservoirs, or interties to State water projects. It is a rural community that relies entirely on local water supplies to meet its needs. Farms, fish, and people all rely on the same limited water resources. It takes a village to solve our water challenges, and we are grateful that our partners have committed their expertise to be part of the solution.”

Streamflows in San Gregorio and Pescadero Creeks are 7-10% of average this year. Some residents have been trucking in water from other areas to drink, cook, and bathe – and many more residents are in danger of running out of water. The popular San Mateo County Memorial Park campground was forced to close for the first time in its history due to the drought. Some farmers have fallowed fields. Steelhead trout and salmon are at risk of extinction as local creeks dry up. Some local community water suppliers and authorities have requested reductions in water use and begun water rationing.

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About the RCD: The Resource Conservation District in San Mateo County is a non-regulatory special district to help people protect, conserve, and restore natural resources through information, education, and technical assistance programs. For 75 years, the RCD has provided assistance to landowners wishing to best manage their natural resources and has been a focal point for local resource conservation and assistance to agriculture.

About American Rivers: American Rivers protects wild rivers, restores damaged rivers, and conserves clean water for people and nature. Since 1973, American Rivers has protected and restored more than 150,000 miles of rivers through advocacy efforts, on-the-ground projects, and an annual America’s Most Endangered Rivers® campaign. Through our river conservation work we are ensuring clean drinking water supplies, revitalizing fish and wildlife, improving recreation, and leaving a legacy of healthy rivers for future generations.

About Trout Unlimited: Trout Unlimited (TU) is North America's leading coldwater fisheries conservation organization, dedicated to the conservation, protection and restoration of trout and salmon fisheries and their watersheds. The organization has more than 150,000 members in 400 chapters across the United States, including 10,000 members in California.

About USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service: The NRCS has been helping people help the land since 1935, getting conservation on the ground through local partnerships to meet local needs.

About San Mateo County: San Mateo County government protects and enhances the health, safety, welfare, and natural resources of the community; and provides quality services that benefit and enrich the lives of the people of the community. San Mateo County government is committed to the highest standards of public service; a common vision of responsiveness; the highest standards of ethical conduct; and treating people with respect and dignity. San Mateo County voters elect five supervisors to oversee County government operations. San Mateo County departments provide residents law enforcement, judicial activities, social services, parks, water, sewer and solid waste services, and community and economic and development programs.

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