

Pacific Flyway Fund
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Supervisor Monica Brown, District 2
675 Texas Street, Suite 6500
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Dear Supervisor Brown,

March 28, 2022

The Pacific Flyway Fund (PFF) is requesting 1.5M as Capstone funding to complete the Phase one development of the Pacific Flyway Center's "Walk in the Marsh" project, an Outdoor Education Center.

The creation of the non-profit "Pacific Flyway Fund" and the purchasing of 845 acres of rare wetland preserve directly adjacent to the Suisun Marsh in the City of Fairfield in Solano County, California is where this project resides. The stage has been set to create this soon-to-be world-class wildlife "Walk in the Marsh and Education Center".

The Mission of the PFF is "To inspire education about and conservation of the Pacific Flyway".

At the Pacific Flyway Center, we will connect people to nature and invite them to experience the wonders of the Pacific Flyway. We are dedicated to the education of youth in the natural world through wet-land education and outdoor exploration.

We will inspire and teach the benefits of land stewardship, natural resources and celebrate the support of birdwatchers, landowners, hunters, and the general public in conservation. We will promote the needs of habitat, waterfowl, wildlife, and people to preserve the native biodiversity of the Pacific Flyway.

The positive impact of creating a "Walk in the Marsh and Outdoor Education Center" within the Fairfield, Solano County area plays a major role in our economy:

- a) Outdoor recreation creates and attracts job seekers and volunteers.
- b) Boosts local economy and tax revenues by attracting tourism and/or retaining retirees in the community through increased and retained business investments yielding the county economic returns.
- c) Increased market values, municipal revenue, and lower crime rates are common outcomes of communities with planned outdoor open spaces, these values bring in homebuyers, workers and attract retirees.
- d) Data point: 2001 Fish and Wildlife survey revealed nearly USD 32B was spent on wildlife watching in the US. USD 7.5B was spent on food, transport, and accommodations. What's notable is that 60% of wildlife watchers did so close to home within 100 miles and the remaining 40% were out-of-town tourists looking for wildlife watching opportunities during their travels.

The intrinsic values and community's economic health and well-being benefit from educational outdoor spaces:

- a) Working with other Cities within our County like Benicia to gain access to raw water, the PFC will provide benefits to land conservation by managing and protecting watersheds and wetlands, acting as a natural storm defense to protect community and property, reducing water and air pollution costs through vegetation improvements and preserving wildlife habitats, endangered species, and biodiversity to sustain natural ecosystems.
- b) Community cohesion through the development of parks and open spaces can build extraordinary levels of social capital. Offering recreational opportunities for people of all ages to interact, communicate, learn and grow. Specifically, urban school-aged children (K-12) and families often have little opportunity for first-hand, interactive experiences with wildlife, its habitat, and the natural world. Counties and Cities are all looking for ways to build a stronger community, leaning into increased connections for youth to develop positive feelings around school and learning. Outdoor education has a way of creating that opportunity.
- c) Data surveys suggest the poverty rate in Solano County is around 10%, where 54% of students are below 80% of the median household income level and receive free or reduced lunches, and the City of Fairfield has 42% of their population seen as economically disadvantaged. Providing healthy, stimulating options with access for ALL within the community maximizes the opportunity for physical activity and greatly reduces the economic burdens associated with lack of exercise. This local "Outdoor Education Center" benefits both the physical and mental health of children to seniors.
- d) The PFC has established partnerships with the local school principals, the current school Superintendent, and experienced environmental educators from Ducks Unlimited and the California Waterfowl Association, all of which are prepared and excited to help PFF prioritize and cultivate promoting the "Walk in the Marsh and Outdoor Education Center".

Providing a Wildland Education Center in Fairfield, California within Solano County, that caters to school-aged children (K-12), families, and communities that can draw from the 10M people that live within 100 miles of the Pacific Flyway Center is a strong financial investment for our community.

The Pacific Flyway Fund, its staff of volunteers, and partners would like to extend our gratitude to you Supervisor Brown for the opportunity to make this funding request of 1.5M dollars to complete phase one for the "Walk in the Marsh and Education Center". Please feel free to reach out to us at any time for further details or explanations surrounding the development of this project.

Regards,

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