



Open Space Authority Urban Grant Program

June 30, 2020

Re: Letter of support for San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory OSA Urban Grant Proposal

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter in support of San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory's (SFBBO's) proposal to plan a facility upgrade that will substantially increase its benefits to the community.

SFBBO's Coyote Creek Field Station represents a unique resource in the area. Public banding demonstrations and group visits allow community members, including children, to observe scientific work in action, and offer a rare opportunity to see wild birds in the hand. Volunteers at the station engage in up-close-and-personal encounters with the local ecology, receive specialized training in bird handling and scientific data collection, and contribute to the continuation of a decades-long avian monitoring program. College and graduate students from area institutions acquire crucial field skills and carry out scientific projects at the station.

West Valley College Biology students are an example of the college students that benefit from visiting the SFBBO Coyote Creek Field Station. Through field trips to the research station, students are able to gain first-hand learning experiences with sampling techniques used in ecological monitoring that is not possible to replicate in a traditional classroom setting. While students are not handling the birds themselves, the impact of visiting a research station, learning about the research being conducted and the volunteer opportunities available to them serves to enhance their learning experience. It engages them in the scientific process, introduces them to citizen science and in general serves to inspire awe and a connection with the natural environment. Our students also benefit from the community and awareness that is built when local educational organizations partner to share the ethic of collaboration as we all work to build a scientifically literate society.

The proposed planning will center on improvements to Coyote Creek Field Station to increase its capacity to provide these benefits to the community, and will empower SFBBO to center feedback from stakeholders in designing the facility and its future programs. Goals for the upgrades under consideration will include planning a larger, more functional, and more sustainable station building and designing a more accessible demonstration area to facilitate data collection, class demonstrations, and outreach programs. The banding station's location in diverse San Jose, CA with its multiple 2- and 4-year colleges and research universities makes it well-suited to serving a variety of educational needs, such as forming part of a course curriculum,



as a source of undergraduate and graduate skills training, and as a research site. The planning proposed here, which will allow the facility improvements to be extensively informed by consultation with educators and researchers, will ensure that the upgraded banding station is tailored to programs that serve local needs.

I support this proposal because it is in line with our Ecology, Biodiversity and Conservation degree. The Coyote Creek Field Station provides a valuable educational experience that better prepares our students for their future careers in research and conservation.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Leticia Gallardo', enclosed within a blue rectangular box.

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Leticia Gallardo
Department of Biology, Co-chair