

From: [Robin Mitchell](#)
To: [Maureen Parkes](#)
Subject: MVSD grant application
Date: Tuesday, September 2, 2025 10:32:26 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Contra Costa County Fish and Wildlife Committee,

I attended the CCCFWC meeting on August 20, 2025. No questions were asked so I am offering this email to clarify a few points that were misrepresented in the meeting.

The Mt. View Sanitary District (MVSD) wastewater treatment plant discharges to Moorhen Marsh which discharges to McNabney Marsh through Peyton Slough which is a tributary of Carquinez Strait. McNabney Marsh is a tidal marsh, not a lake. McNabney Marsh is owned and maintained by MVSD and East Bay Parks Regional Park District. The flow of water in and out of McNabney Marsh from the Strait is controlled by a tide gate that is owned and operated manually by a private company. Neither MVSD nor East Bay Parks has control of the tide gate. A project is currently underway to automate that tide gate which will help to regulate the flow of water to a more natural state, improving habitat and water quality. MVSD and East Bay Parks are participating in the planning and implementation of that project to ensure the needs of McNabney are integrated into the plan. Maintenance of McNabney has no part in the application submitted.

Moorhen Marsh is the first constructed wetland on the west coast dependent solely on *treated* effluent as its primary water source. The wastewater treatment plant treats the wastewater and Moorhen Marsh receives it. MVSD currently meets all permit requirements for water quality, including nutrients. Aeration is not needed to treat the water to meet permit limits. MVSD is not trying to sneak in required maintenance or treatment, as was stated. The purpose of the aeration project is to protect the wildlife and habitat in Moorhen Marsh from harmful algal blooms. These algal blooms have been seen throughout the Bay Area and have affected Moorhen Marsh for the past three years. The purpose of aeration is to interrupt the algae life cycle, thus reducing algae, thus improving the habitat and overall ecosystem. The Wetlands Education Program is a direct beneficiary of the health of Moorhen Marsh. Students learn to appreciate a thriving environment and its wildlife firsthand. When there are harmful algal blooms in Moorhen, the marsh closes, and the field trips are canceled. MVSD collects no fees to support the Wetlands Education Program. All sewer rates/fees collected are for wastewater treatment. MVSD views the Wetlands Education Program as a priority and thus spends \$55,000/year to run this program so that it can be provided free to students. That cost excludes the staff time it takes to maintain the program and do things like apply for grants.

The acquisition of sustainable lifelike animal specimens is important, so students have an accurate representation of the wetland wildlife and their adaptations. While the Lindsay Wildlife Experience is a local resource, they host their own wildlife educational programs which utilize the animal specimens. Our program operates four days a week, 28 weeks a year, and specimens from Lindsay Wildlife are not as readily available as was suggested. In the past, Lindsay Wildlife would come retrieve their specimens as they needed for their programs. Having our own specimens would guarantee that they are present during all field trips and teachers would not have to pivot at the last second to account for not having them.

There is no rule regarding how often one can apply for this grant, so it seems that the frequency of application should not be a criterion to consider or weigh. However, it was brought up regarding more than one applicant. Specifically, it was mentioned that someone who hasn't worked for MVSD for several years used to apply every year. It seems that frequency does matter in the decision making, even if it is at an unofficial level.

Please let me know if there is anything else that I can clarify regarding our application.

Robin Mitchell

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