MEMORANDUM

DATE:        April 12, 2010

TO:          Board of Supervisors

FROM:        Lew C. Bauman
             County Administrative Officer

SUBJECT:     County Administrative Officer’s Weekly Report for April 12, 2010

This is the weekly report by the County Administrative Officer to the Board of Supervisors. This report provides information on issues affecting the County and the progress of County activities.

Department

Monterey County Free Libraries

April 11th – April 17th Libraries throughout the United States are celebrating National Library Week. The Cities of Gonzales, Greenfield, King City, Marina, and Soledad, and well as the County of Monterey, have all passed resolutions or made proclamations in recognition of the occasion and acknowledging the value of libraries to the community. The City of Seaside will be recognizing the occasion on Thursday, the 15th of April.

The theme of National Library week this year is Communities thrive @ your library. Economic pressures have made libraries busier than ever these days and have become the hub of community activities for people of all ages and from diverse backgrounds. Monterey County Free Libraries play a major role in improving the quality of life for County residents and in preparing them for the future. Our vision is to inform and to delight.

Services and programs offered have transformed the library from its traditional image as a quiet place to read and borrow books to a buzzing community center. Services available at our local branches include: storytimes for children; movies and gaming for teens; downloadable e-books and audiobooks; access to computers, the Internet and Wi-Fi; literacy tutoring; Libraries by mail; and much, much more. Stop by your library today and discover a whole new world waiting for
Planning Department

The Monterey County Planning Department has been working on a collaborative effort to provide mitigation sites for transportation improvement projects within one of the most sensitive areas in the state. The Elkhorn Slough Early Mitigation Partnership program has been established for such a purpose.

The California Transportation Foundation just announced that this program has won the 2010 statewide award as the Environmental Enhancement Project of the Year. In addition to this 2010 award, the Transportation Agency for Monterey County previously awarded the program the 2008 Excellence in Transportation Award.

The Mission Statement for the program is:

To develop advanced mitigation to be available for transportation projects within the Elkhorn Slough Watershed and available as a template for use elsewhere in California.

The overall objective of the program is to plan, prior to construction of transportation projects, the location and enhancement of mitigation sites for those projects. The program would allow the mitigation to be provided on a more regional scale and developed earlier in the construction process. It also allows the project proponent the ability to identify the mitigation in the environmental document prepared for the project.

The program was developed through a partnership between Caltrans, the County Planning Department, US Fish and Wildlife Service, US Environmental Protection Agency, the Elkhorn Slough Foundation, California Department of Fish and Game, the Federal Highway Administration, California Regional Water Quality Control Board, US Army Corps of Engineers, National Marine Fisheries Service, UC Davis, and the California Coastal Commission. The program includes an Interagency Steering Committee, identifies funding sources, and establishes agreements so that mitigation can be quickly identified and implemented, speeding up the overall planning, engineering, and construction process.
The program includes a pilot project, utilizing GIS to match an inventory of specific habitats that are projected to be impacted by future projects with mitigation sites that could be available in the watershed. The program has been established to rely on a science-based approach to provide a holistic look at mitigating for habitat loss, rather than on a project-by-project basis. This allows cost-effective resource conservation on a watershed level, providing a better biological response to construction impacts.

Elizabeth Gonzales and Carl Holm from the Planning Department were instrumental in setting up the partnership and in the development of the program.

**Cooperative Extension**

A local Cooperative Extension research project was just selected as this month’s “featured article” for Weed Technology and has been made available to the public at BioOne.org at: http://www.bioone.org/doi/abs/10.1614/WT-09-022.1.

From 2006 to 2007 we conducted trials on the EcoDan cultivator guidance system. It was a new technology that was originally developed at U.C. Davis and is now commercially available to growers. It helps a tractor driver guide the cultivator through a lettuce or broccoli field more accurately and rapidly, and with less stress on the tractor driver and reducing the need for manual or chemical weeding. Our research evaluated its impact on herbicide usage and weed control efficiency. The results of this research were extended to growers by presentations at the annual U.C. Salinas Valley Weed School and through articles in the U.C. Cooperative Extension Monterey County Crop Notes Newsletter. An article of this research entitled, “Evaluation and economics of a machine-vision guided cultivation system in broccoli and lettuce” was accepted by, and published in Weed Technology.

This concludes the CAO Weekly Report.