

NAME: Elkhorn Slough Tidal Marsh Restoration: Building Resilience with the Beneficial Reuse of Sediment

LOCATION: Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve, Monterey County, California

ACRES: 21 acres salt marsh

NON-FEDERAL SPONSOR: Elkhorn Slough Foundation

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

This project will add sediment to subsided historic marshes in Elkhorn Slough. The marsh will be restored through the placement of sediment from a levee capacity maintenance project along the Pajaro River. The proposed project will divert as much of that material as possible for beneficial reuse, with the acreage of restored wetlands directly proportionate to the quantity of sediment received and placed. This project will also create a 3 acre native grass buffer between a cut flower farmland to improve surface water quality by intercepting stormwater runoff.

EXPECTED BENEFITS:

Habitats, particularly tidal marsh, intertidal mudflat, and soft subtidal habitats, will be made more resilient to sea level rise by reduced tidal scour and greater sediment availability. Additionally, water quality will be improved in Elkhorn Slough by increased salt marsh processes. The project will likely benefit the federally threatened Southern sea otter, harbor seals, starry flounder, leopard shark, shiner surfperch, California halibut, and the Northern anchovy.

STATUS: Planning and Design