



For Immediate Release

March 11, 2014

Contact: Farhad Mansourian, (707) 794-3057

**Cooperation between agencies produces improved flood control
for new Novato Creek Bridge**

Petaluma, CA – Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) announced today that the Marin Board of Supervisors, in its capacity as the Marin County Flood Control & Water Conservation District, approved an agreement that will result in an enhanced bridge design for SMART’s new Novato Creek Bridge.

This approval is the culmination of a cooperative process that has been in the works for over three years, and combines participation between the County’s Flood Control District, the City of Novato and SMART to produce significant flood control improvements.

“I was serving on the Novato City Council when heavy rains caused flooding that backed up into neighborhoods like Nave Gardens in January of 2006,” recalled SMART Board Chair and Marin County Supervisor Judy Arnold. “We coordinated with the County, who had to come and breach the levee in this area. This is an issue I’ve continued to work on since joining the Board of Supervisors in 2007.”

The Marin County Flood Control District has since completed a \$1.1 million downstream dredging project that reduced sediment and improved wildlife habitat. Continued Arnold, “But the bridge was and is an important element in reducing the overall flooding potential. It’s hard to express how excited I am that the work that SMART, the County and the City of Novato have done together will result in such a substantial benefit to our residents.”

The replacement of the Novato Creek Bridge was included in Phase 1 of the SMART project by the SMART board of directors in 2011. The base bid provided to SMART by the contractor proposed a bridge design with some flood control improvements, replacing all of the timber bents with steel pile bents and re-aligning them with the direction of the creek’s flow. It also raises the bridge by over three feet, maintaining bent spacing at mostly 15 feet with two bents at 25-foot spacing, reusing timber stringers from the existing bridge.

At the request of the Flood Control District, SMART agreed to explore an enhanced bridge design that would also increase creek flow capacity and reduce debris clogging potential at the bridge. The resulting design replaces the entire bridge with steel members and doubles the bent spacing to an average of 30 feet. This will provide substantial reduction in debris clogging potential and improves the flow capacity of the creek.

The incremental cost between the base bid and enhanced bridge designs is being funded by a combination of \$158,844 allocated by the City of Novato in 2012 specifically to flood control improvements at the Novato Creek Bridge site and \$91,156 in County Flood Control Zone 1 funds. The total cost of the enhanced bridge replacement is estimated to be approximately \$2.6 million.

The SMART train and pathway project is currently under construction and will provide a new regional transportation backbone with improved transit options for all North Bay residents.

#