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CONTACT: Jennifer Flachman, Public Information Officer
flachmanj@cityofmerced.org, 209-564-0235

Mike Dunbar, Office of Assembly Member Adam Gray
Mike.Dunbar@asm.ca.gov, 209-404-5569

Bear Creek Restoration Project

Merced, Calif. (October 24, 2022) – Assembly Member Adam Gray (D-Merced) will join the City of Merced in announcing the Bear Creek Restoration Project launch, Tuesday, October 25, 2022 at 10 am at Albert Lawson Park on 28th Street in Merced. The park is accessible between H and I Streets.

Supported by \$6 million in funding secured by Assembly Member Adam Gray, the project will restore a 6-mile-long portion of the Creek from McKee Road to 16th Street in the City of Merced. The scope includes removing invasive plant overgrowth, trash, and other pollution to improve the habitat for local plants and animals and the implementation of an embankment repair program to restore all areas deemed necessary by the team.

“There is no more important issue than water in the Valley,” stated Gray. “The Merced, Tuolumne, Stanislaus, and San Joaquin rivers that flow through our district provide the lifeline for farms, jobs, and food production. Restoring and preserving the creek will significantly enhance its natural functions and create recreational opportunities for walkers, runners, and bike riders,” concluded Gray.

The project includes surveys to evaluate the Creek’s current conditions and identify areas where mitigation and restoration are needed, a vegetation survey to identify invasive species locations, and a topographical survey to identify areas of embankment that have been excavated and could become unstable should water rise.

Based on survey outcomes and the procurement of state and federal environmental permits, a habitat restoration design will be developed to support multi-season vegetation and restoration plans. Specialized construction and vegetation teams will begin work to abate invasive species and restore the Creek, creating a healthy riparian area to protect the terrestrial wildlife and aquatic habitats. Additionally, the team will implement an embankment repair program. Lastly, crews will focus on improving water quality and the overall aesthetic beauty of the Creek.



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“This is a win for the City of Merced,” stated Mayor Matthew Serratto. “We thank Assembly Member Gray for his diligent work in securing \$6 million in funding for a project that will increase creek access by connecting nearby community parks and multi-use

recreational trails and promote stewardship with surrounding neighborhoods. This will have far-reaching environmental benefits for our community.”

Partnerships between UC Merced, Merced College, and local schools will provide opportunities for students of all ages to participate in the survey, design, and installation work. Other partner agencies include North Star Engineering, San Joaquin River Partners, and the City of Merced.

For project updates, please visit the Bear Creek Restoration Project at www.engage.cityofmerced.org.

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