



COUNTY OF SONOMA

575 ADMINISTRATION
DRIVE, ROOM 102A
SANTA ROSA, CA 95403

SUMMARY REPORT

Agenda Date: 8/12/2025

To: Board of Directors, Sonoma County Water Agency

Department or Agency Name(s): Sonoma County Water Agency

Staff Name and Phone Number: Grant Davis, 707-547-1900 and Dale Roberts, 707-547-1979

Vote Requirement: Majority

Supervisorial District(s): All

Title:

Climate Equity Strategy

Recommended Action:

Authorize Sonoma County Water Agency's General Manager to execute an agreement with Rincon Consultants, Inc., in substantially the form as the draft presented to this Board, for climate equity strategy development through December 31, 2027, in the not-to-exceed amount of \$150,000.

Executive Summary:

Sonoma County Water Agency (Sonoma Water) recognizes that climate-related inequities exist within its service area. Sonoma Water seeks to develop a climate equity strategy to clarify the effects of climate change on its services, assess the potential for inequitable impacts to vulnerable communities, and codevelop multi-benefit solutions in partnership with impacted communities. A climate equity strategy can help identify climate-related inequities in Sonoma Water's provision of services and help Sonoma Water develop strategies to address them in partnership with local community members who are experiencing the greatest inequities.

Discussion:

Climate change poses a threat to communities and the systems on which they rely, including Sonoma Water's built and natural infrastructure. In recognition of that threat, Sonoma Water has long been a leader in climate science and adaptation planning.

A climate equity strategy can help identify climate-related inequities in Sonoma Water's provision of services and help Sonoma Water develop strategies to address them in partnership with local community members who are experiencing the greatest inequities.

Sonoma Water's 2023 Energy and Climate Resiliency Policy additionally recognized that climate change disproportionately impacts low-income and communities of color globally and within Sonoma Water's service area and committed to developing infrastructure planning processes that result in better outcomes for all members of our community.

Sonoma Water seeks to develop a climate equity strategy to clarify the effects of climate change on Sonoma Water's core services and to assess the potential for inequitable impacts to vulnerable communities. In addition, a climate equity strategy will include multi-benefit solutions to the identified impacts developed in partnership with impacted communities. These solutions may be presented to the Board on a project-by-

project basis as they are implemented. Through the development of a climate equity strategy, Sonoma Water seeks to better understand how climate change currently impacts and will impact vulnerable communities within Sonoma Water's service area. Sonoma Water would like to hire Rincon Consultants, Inc. to develop this climate equity strategy.

SELECTION PROCESS

Rincon Consultants, Inc. (Consultant) was selected from a competitive selection process. Attached is a memo that explains the competitive selection process.

Sonoma Water may seek to amend or enter into subsequent agreement(s) with Board approval, if required, relying upon this competitive selection process after the preliminary or initial work is completed.

SERVICES TO BE PERFORMED

Under the agreement, Consultant will develop a climate equity strategy to guide Sonoma Water's climate resilience planning and implementation.

The cost of services will not exceed \$150,000; the term end date is December 31, 2027.

Under the agreement, the General Manager will have the ability to extend the term of the agreement for up to two additional years by providing written notice to the other party thirty days in advance of the expiration date. The extension would be formalized in an amended agreement or amendment signed by the parties.

County of Sonoma Strategic Plan Alignment:

Goal 4, Objective 2: Racial Equity and Social Justice; "Where possible, we ensure that climate impacts are considered in meetings and information sharing, including holding virtual meetings, limiting printing of collateral, and offering other ways of providing useful information."

Sonoma Water Strategic Plan Alignment

Goal: Community Engagement.

Strategy: Build collaborative partnerships, trust, and long-term relationships with the community through proactive communication and education.

Action: Focus public outreach and engagement to increase understanding of Sonoma Water's needs and challenges for infrastructure investments.

Racial Equity:

Was this item identified as an opportunity to apply the Racial Equity Toolkit?

No

The evaluation performed under this contract will inform future actions by Sonoma Water and how those actions impact our community, centering disadvantaged and communities of color. Future projects, programs, and actions analyzed by the Climate Equity Strategy will require Board approval and likely require racial equity analysis.

Prior Board Actions:

08/15/2023: Approved the updated Energy and Climate Resiliency Policy to replace Sonoma Water's previous

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Energy Policy and authorize and direct the General Manager to implement the Energy and Climate Resiliency Policy.

10/19/2021: Approved Sonoma County Water Agency's Climate Adaptation Plan.

FISCAL SUMMARY

| Expenditures | FY25-26 Adopted | FY26-27 Projected | FY27-28 Projected |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Budgeted Expenses | | | |
| Additional Appropriation Requested | \$150,000 | | |
| Total Expenditures | \$150,000 | | |
| Funding Sources | | | |
| General Fund/WA GF | | | |
| State/Federal | | | |
| Fees/Other | \$150,000 | | |
| Use of Fund Balance | | | |
| General Fund Contingencies | | | |
| Total Sources | \$150,000 | | |

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

Additional appropriations of \$150,000 are required from the Sustainability/Renewable Energy Fund to process this expense. With Board approval, unused appropriations budgeted in FY 2024/25 will be rolled forward to FY 2025/26 in Sonoma Water's Q1 Consolidated Budget Adjustments.

| Staffing Impacts: | | | |
|--|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Position Title (Payroll Classification) | Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step) | Additions (Number) | Deletions (Number) |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

N/A

Attachments:

Attachment 1: Agreement with Rincon Consultants, Inc.

Attachment 2: Consultant Selection Memo

Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board:

None