



COUNTY OF SONOMA

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

SUMMARY REPORT

Agenda Date: 1/7/2025

To: Board of Directors of the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District
Department or Agency Name(s): Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District
Staff Name and Phone Number: Leslie Lew 565-7367
Vote Requirement: Majority
Supervisorial District(s): 4th

Title:

Soda Springs Ranch Open Space Preserve (0613) - Initial Public Access and Operation & Maintenance Funding Agreement

Recommended Action:

Authorize the General Manager of the Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District (Ag + Open Space) to enter into a funding agreement with the City of Cloverdale to provide \$962,375 for initial public access and operation and maintenance of the Ag + Open Space-protected Soda Springs Ranch Open Space Preserve. (Fourth District)

Executive Summary:

The Soda Springs Ranch Open Space Preserve ("Property") is owned and operated by the City of Cloverdale. The City of Cloverdale conveyed a Conservation Easement ("Easement") and Recreation Conservation Covenant ("Recreation Covenant") to Ag + Open Space on September 1, 2023. The Easement protects the scenic, natural, and recreational and educational resource values of the Property, which is adjacent to the City of Cloverdale and near the Ag + Open Space-protected Porterfield Creek Trails Open Space Preserve. The Recreation Covenant ensures the Property is open to the public in perpetuity as an open space preserve after compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The City of Cloverdale is requesting \$962,375 for specific initial public access and operation and maintenance activities, as identified below and in the attached funding request. Consistent with Ag + Open Space's Expenditure Plan and its Initial Public Access and Operation and Maintenance (IPAOM) Policy, Ag + Open Space may provide funding to assist in providing public access on Ag + Open Space-protected recreational properties.

Discussion:

Most of the Property is visible from Highway 101, Cloverdale Boulevard, and other public roads in Cloverdale. Porterfield Creek Trails Open Space Preserve is nearby, but not adjacent to the Property. The Property is undeveloped and has been historically used for timber harvest, hunting, grazing, equipment storage, personal recreation, and open space. There are urban residential properties along the entire eastern Property boundary.

The Property is in the Porterfield Creek watershed and contains 0.3 miles of the North Branch of Porterfield Creek. Additionally, nearly a mile of an unnamed tributary to Cloverdale Creek runs along the Property's northern border, and other small, intermittent tributaries to Porterfield Creek and Cloverdale Creek cross the

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Property. The Property features mountainous land, with oak woodlands and other hardwoods, chaparral, grasslands, fir forest, as well as redwood groves and riparian vegetation surrounding the creeks.

The Property is intended to be a recreational destination point for City of Cloverdale residents and visitors, offering the public the ability to access and experience multiple habitat types and scenic vistas within walking distance of nearby homes and Cloverdale City Park. Pursuant to the Recreation Covenant, the Property will be open to the public daily once the City of Cloverdale completes its CEQA review and public access improvements, which will be funded through the proposed agreement.

On February 2, 2016, by Resolution No. 16-0040, the Board adopted its current IPAOM Policy under which Ag + Open Space provides initial public access and operation and maintenance funding for District-protected recreational lands, consistent with the Expenditure Plan approved by Sonoma County voters in November 2006 as part of the Sonoma County Open Space, Clean Water and Farmland Protection Measure, Measure F.

Funding Agreement

Ag + Open Space recommends entering into an IPAOM funding agreement with the City of Cloverdale in which Ag+ Open Space will provide \$962,375 for specific initial public access items as described in the IPAOM Funding Request (Attachment 1). The items include trailhead development, trail construction, parking, and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) improvements, signage, gates, fences, boundary surveys, resource studies, CEQA review, operations and maintenance, and community engagement. Ag + Open Space will provide funds on a reimbursement basis, meaning that the City will receive payment after submitting receipts and reports to Ag + Open Space for eligible expenses.

All funds must be expended by September 1, 2026, which is three years from the date of the City of Cloverdale’s acquisition of the Property as specified under the IPAOM Policy. Under the proposed agreement, the District’s General Manager may grant an extension of time to complete the contemplated work of up to two years in the case of extraordinary circumstances.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

Funding for CEQA review by the City of Cloverdale is included in the proposed funding agreement. All funding for alterations and improvements is conditioned on a determination by the Ag + Open Space General Manager that there has been full compliance with CEQA.

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

No

Prior Board Actions:

August 28, 2023: District Board of Directors authorizes up to \$2,100,000 of funding toward the City of Cloverdale’s purchase of a fee interest in the Soda Springs Ranch Open Space Preserve Property and the District's acquisition of a conservation easement and recreation covenant over the property. (Reso. 23-0259)

February 2, 2016: District Board of Directors approves the District’s IPAOM Policy (Reso 16-0040).

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 24-25 Adopted	FY 25-26 Projected	FY 26-27 Projected
Budgeted Expenses	\$962,375		
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures	\$962,375		
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other	\$962,375		
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
Total Sources	\$962,375		

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

As IPAOM project contracts are fully executed, Ag + Open Space encumbers the entire amount. Thus, Ag + Open Space will encumber the entire contract amount in FY 24-25. Sufficient appropriations exist for the \$962,375 contract in FY 24-25. The amount is funded through the Sonoma County voter-approved Measure F, which allows up to 10% of annual Measure F revenue to be set aside in a separate fund for IPAOM activities. As of June 30, 2024, the IPAOM fund had accumulated \$17,473,935, \$4,080,379 of which has been encumbered for other executed IPAOM contracts.

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

None.

Attachments:

1. City of Cloverdale Funding Request for Soda Springs Ranch Open Space
2. Soda Springs IPAOM Agreement

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

1. Conservation Easement
2. Recreation Conservation Covenant.