



SUMMARY REPORT

Agenda Date: 3/18/2025

To: County of Sonoma Board of Supervisors

Department or Agency Name(s): Department of Health Services

Staff Name and Phone Number: Jennifer Solito, 707-565-4774, Christine Sosko, 707-565-6521

Vote Requirement: 4/5th

Supervisorial District(s): Second District

Title:

Sampson/Field of the Woods Church Compound Site Remediation

Recommended Action:

- A) Authorize the Director of Health Services, or designee, to execute an agreement with EBA Engineering for a term of March 18, 2025, to June 30, 2026, to perform Environmental Site Remediation Services for a total not-to-exceed amount of \$285,062.
- B) Authorize the Director of Health Services, or designee, to execute modifications to the agreements in this Board Item which do not significantly change the scopes of service and/or to increase the total not-to-exceed amount in order to address increased service needs, subject to available funding and review and approval by County Counsel.
- C) Adopt a Resolution authorizing budgetary adjustments to the Department of Health Services Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Adopted Budget in the amount of \$285,062 to reflect revenues and expenditures associated with the Environmental Site Remediation Award. **(Second District) (4/5th Vote Required)**

Executive Summary:

This item seeks approval for the execution of a contract with EBA Engineering for Environmental Site Remediation Services to develop a comprehensive Site Remediation Work Plan for the Liberty Road Property, located at 1196, 1150, 1122, and 1080 Liberty Road, Petaluma, Sonoma County (APN 021-121-016). The Work Plan will provide an initial pathway to identify how to address environmental contamination and ensure the safe, sustainable redevelopment of the site. The total cost of services is \$285,062 and will be funded from available Solid Waste Special Revenue Fund (22051000-11750) accumulated balance of \$2,232,207.

Discussion:

The Department of Health Services (DHS) Environmental Health Section, designated as the Local Enforcement Agency (LEA) by CalRecycle, is responsible for enforcing solid waste laws within the County. The Liberty Road Property is the former Sampson compound, which is currently under a stalled receivership. A site remediation plan is necessary in order to create a trajectory towards clean-up and to bring the property out of receivership. The LEA is proposing to utilize limited use enforcement funds in the Solid Waste Special Revenue Fund balances to perform an environmental assessment and provide details on what activities are needed to address remediation requirements to bring the property into environmental health and safety compliance.

Background

The site at issue is the former “Sampson/Field of the Woods Church compound” located on Liberty Road just outside of Petaluma. The compound was the site of criminal and extremist activity for years. There were numerous County Code and State law violations on this property, dating back many decades, ranged from criminal activity to building code violations and sub-standard housing. As relevant here, the property was also used for illegal disposal and landfilling. The County sued the landowner in 2015 and obtained a judgment in 2016. The Superior Court then appointed a Receiver to remedy the code violations that had not already been addressed. While the property is formally still owned by Field of the Woods Church, Inc., the property remains in the Receiver’s control, and the Receiver acts as an agent of the Superior Court.

The Receiver had addressed most of the surface-level County Code violations by June 2018, but the Receiver’s plans to sell the property to recover abatement costs have become complicated by the level of illegal landfilling that has been discovered. DHS Environmental Health (acting as the Local Enforcement Agency for the State’s solid waste laws) obtained assistance from CalRecycle which conducted an environmental investigation of the site in April 2021. The investigation found significant subsurface landfilling in pockets throughout the site, including detection of some heavy metals at hazardous waste levels, other contaminants such as TPH-diesel, motor oil, pesticides, volatile organic compounds, semi-volatile organic compounds, as well as E coli and coliform. The report ultimately simply recommends that the uses of the property be restricted, without examining pathways for the property to be re-used. The proposal to restrict the uses of the property does not facilitate the cleanup and impacts the Receiver’s ability to recover abatement expenses from the sale of the property.

Currently, the amount of money required to remediate the site is unknown, which is impacting all discussion of next steps. Having already spent more than the property is potentially worth, the Receiver is unwilling to spend any more money on the property under the circumstances but is willing to cooperate with the County and retain site control. The proposed contract will provide both the County and the Receiver with crucial information to work towards an ultimate solution. It is currently not possible to evaluate possible next steps without a better understanding of the cleanup costs.

Environmental Site Remediation Planning

The proposed agreement will include the following services:

Conduct an Environmental Investigation and Review of the property located at 1080, 1122, 1150, and 1196 Liberty Road in Petaluma, CA and develop a work plan for site remediation.

The scope of work primarily consists of the following tasks:

- 1. Site Assessment:** Conduct a thorough site assessment to identify environmental contaminants, including but not limited to soil and groundwater contamination.
- 2. Remediation Options Evaluation:** Evaluate remediation options and develop a detailed plan for remediation activities, considering factors such as effectiveness, cost, and timeline.
- 3. Regulatory Compliance:** Ensure that the proposed remediation plan complies with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations, including those set forth by the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
- 4. Stakeholder Engagement:** Engage with relevant stakeholders, including property owners, regulatory agencies, and community members, to gather input and address concerns throughout the remediation process.

- 5. Reporting:** Prepare comprehensive reports documenting the site assessment findings, remediation plan, and any other relevant information.

Procurement Process

On November 14, 2024, DHS released a Request for Proposal (RFP), seeking qualified contractors to develop a comprehensive Site Remediation Work Plan for the Liberty Road Property, located at 1196, 1150, 1122, and 1080 Liberty Road, Petaluma, Sonoma County.

Two proposals were submitted in response to the RFP and on December 27, 2024, the DHS evaluation panel, composed of two representatives from the Department of Health Services and one from the Public Infrastructure Department, reviewed the proposals. Based on the evaluation criteria, the panel recommended awarding the contract to EBA Engineering, Inc., the highest-ranked proposer.

EBA Engineering, Inc

EBA Engineering is a civil and environmental engineering firm with recognized expertise in the fields of solid waste, environmental consulting, civil engineering, surveying, and planning services. Since 1979, EBA’s staff of engineers, geologists, and environmental professionals has been involved in essentially every aspect of civil and environmental engineering for landfill projects. EBA is involved with Federal, State, and local regulatory agencies and maintains an active awareness of current regulations pertaining to design, planning, environmental issues for landfill projects and remediation of property cleanups. In addition, EBA has developed a long-standing working relationship with the County of Sonoma providing a variety of similar services under previous and current contracts.

This item requests Board approval for the Director of Health Services, or designee, to enter into an agreement with EBA Engineering to provide Environmental Site Remediation Planning Services for a total not-to-exceed amount of \$285,062 for a term of March 18, 2025, to June 30, 2026.

Proposed Funding

DHS proposes to use enforcement funds to fund the proposed contract, which by statute may only be used for enhancing solid waste enforcement within the local enforcement agency’s jurisdiction, including “(1) Increasing enforcement programs. (2) Expanding the agency’s enforcement capabilities. (3) Bringing solid waste facilities into compliance with this division. (4) Remediating illegal or abandoned solid waste disposal sites.” Public Resources Code section 45010.

Strategic Plan:

Not Applicable

Racial Equity:

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

No

Prior Board Actions:

After decades of unsuccessful administrative enforcement, the Board authorized County Counsel to file abatement litigation in May 2015. On May 3, 2016, the Board authorized the Director of Permit Sonoma to enter into a contract with Cream’s Dismantling, Inc. to clean up and abate the code violations. In January 2022,

the Board authorized the execution of an agreement with the Receiver to allow for site maintenance and improvements to deter illegal dumping, and the Director of Environmental Health’s use of SAC crews.

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 24-25 Adopted	FY25-26 Projected	FY 26-27 Projected
Budgeted Expenses			
Additional Appropriation Requested	\$285,062		
Total Expenditures	\$285,062		
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance	\$285,062		
Contingencies			
Total Sources	\$285,062		

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

DHS proposes to utilize funds with restricted uses under Public Resources Code section 45010. As of December 31, 2024, the Solid Waste Special Revenue Fund (22051000-11750) had a balance of \$2,232,207, which is sufficient to cover the \$285,062 contract cost.

The estimated contract costs for fiscal year 2024-2025 are \$50,000. The remaining amount will be allocated for expenditure in FY 25-26. The balance of \$235,062 will be allocated for payment in fiscal year 2025-2026 and included in the Supplemental Budget Adjustments during the budget process.

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

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

None

Attachments:

- Attachment 1 - Budget Resolution
- Attachment 2 - Draft Agreement

Related Items “On File” with the Clerk of the Board:

None