



SUMMARY REPORT

Agenda Date: 2/8/2022

To: Board of Directors, Sonoma County Water Agency
Department or Agency Name(s): Sonoma County Water Agency
Staff Name and Phone Number: Chase Takajo, 707-521-1872
Vote Requirement: Majority
Supervisory District(s): Countywide

Title:

As-Needed Grazing and Vegetation Management Services

Recommended Action:

Authorize Sonoma County Water Agency's General Manager to execute an agreement with Chasin Goat Grazing for goat grazing vegetation management services through December 31, 2024, in the not-to-exceed amount of \$405,023 in a form approved by County Counsel.

Executive Summary:

Sonoma County Water Agency (Sonoma Water) facilities have open space areas that require vegetation management on an as-needed basis. Use of grazing livestock for vegetation management is cost effective, quiet, and does not involve the use of toxic chemicals. In addition, livestock can often reach locations inaccessible to other methods of vegetation management.

Discussion:

HISTORY OF ITEM/BACKGROUND

Sonoma Water facilities have substantial open space areas that require vegetation management on an as-needed basis for natural resource management, reduction of fire fuels, and control of nuisance plants in specific locations. By utilizing goat grazing services, Sonoma Water is collaborating with local agriculture in an effort to better manage vegetation growing on its facilities. Use of livestock provides an eco-friendlier method for vegetation management than mechanical and manual vegetation control. Also, grazing does not involve the use of toxic chemicals, increases vegetation biodiversity, and encourages the growth of native species. Livestock also provides a cost-effective way to manage different types of vegetation that may be on difficult terrain and are inaccessible to other methods of vegetation management.

GRANT FUNDING

This agreement will be partially funded by the State Coastal Conservancy's Forest Health and Wildfire Resilience Program through Sonoma Water's awarded grant project, "Wildfire Resilience at Spring Lake Regional Park." In June 2021, the Coastal Conservancy announced that Sonoma Water was awarded \$277,166 in grant funds to reduce hazardous fuels around Spring Lake Regional Park through the use of hand crews, targeted mowing, and targeted grazing. The Board of Directors approved a Concurrent Resolution on August 17, 2021 for Sonoma Water to execute the grant agreements and necessary grant documents to accept the award and implement the project. This agreement will be utilized to implement a portion of the grant scope by conducting grazing and mowing activities at Spring Lake Regional Park. Grant-related activities will fund

\$105,023 of this agreement.

SELECTION PROCESS

On December 8, 2020 the County of Sonoma Purchasing Department completed a competitive selection process to create a list of qualified targeted grazing service providers. In the interest of efficient use of County resources, Sonoma Water selected Chasin Goat Grazing (Service Provider) from the following list provided by Purchasing:

1. Chasin Goat Grazing
2. Sonoma Mountain Institute
3. Goats R Us
4. Ecosystem Concepts
5. Living Systems
6. Francis Cornett

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 proposed agreement, Service Provider will provide as-needed goat grazing vegetation management services.

The cost of services will not exceed \$405,023; the term end date is December 31, 2024.

The agreement includes two options for Sonoma Water to extend this agreement for a period of one year each by providing written notice to Service Provider thirty days in advance of the expiration date of the agreement and of the first extension option.

County of Sonoma Strategic Plan:

Pillar: Climate Action and Resiliency

Goal: Goal 5: Maximize opportunities for mitigation of climate change and adaptation through land conservation work and land use policies

Objective: Objective 2: Expand outreach and education on vegetation management and provide additional resources to land owners to help mitigate fire risk.

By utilizing goat grazing services, Sonoma Water is working with local agriculture to better manage vegetation growing on its facilities and thus mitigate fire risk by reducing fire fuels. Use of grazing livestock for vegetation management is a climate-friendly option because, unlike mechanical and manual vegetation control methods, it does not use toxic chemicals or emissions-producing machinery.

Sonoma Water Strategic Plan Alignment:

Climate Change, Goal 1: Continuing improving our ability to respond and adapt to climate change.

Sonoma Water is employing a more eco-friendly method for vegetation management than mechanical and manual vegetation control. Goat grazing increases vegetation biodiversity, encourages the growth of native species, and does not involve the use of toxic chemicals or emissions-producing machinery.

Prior Board Actions:

08/17/2021: Approved a concurrent resolution authorizing Sonoma Water's General Manager to take all necessary steps to obtain grant funding from the State of California's State Coastal Conservancy Forest Health and Wildfire Resilience Program, including entering into required funding agreements and related instruments in form approved by County Counsel. Also authorized the General Manager to negotiate and execute sub agreements to implement the grant.

04/19/2019: Approved agreement between Sonoma Water and Chasin Goat Grazing for goat grazing vegetation management services. Cost \$300,000; term end December 31, 2021.

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 21-22 Adopted	FY22-23 Projected	FY 23-24 Projected
Budgeted Expenses	\$205,023	\$100,000	\$100,000
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures	\$205,023	\$100,000	\$100,000
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal	\$105,023		
Fees/Other	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
Total Sources	\$205,023	\$100,000	\$100,000

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

Budgeted amount of \$205,023 is available from FY 2021/2022 appropriations for the Flood Control Zone 1A Fund (\$100,000) and the Spring Lake Park Fund (\$105,023). Offsetting revenue in the amount of \$105,023 will come from the State Coastal Conservancy's Forest Health and Wildfire Resilience Program. Non-grant funded goat grazing vegetation management services will be funded under the Flood Control Zone 1A Fund.

FY 2022/2023 and FY 2023/2024 appropriations will be budgeted in those fiscal years.

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

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Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

N/A

Attachments:

None

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

None