



SUMMARY REPORT

Agenda Date: 7/16/2024

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: Jennifer Kuszmar, 565-7266
Vote Requirement: Majority
Supervisory District(s): Countywide

Title:

First Amendment to Agreement O-1465 Singing Stream Conservation Consultants Acquisition Strategy, Policy, and Transactions

Recommended Action:

Authorize the General Manager of the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District to execute a first amendment to an agreement with Singing Stream Conservation Consultants by adding \$150,000, for a new total not to exceed of \$300,000, with no change to the term ending June 30, 2026 with the option to extend two years.

Executive Summary:

In July 2023, the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District entered into a professional services agreement in the amount of \$150,000 over three years for land acquisition strategy, policy, and transaction services related to acquisition of District conservation easements, transfer of fee lands to recreational partners, and completion of Matching Grant Projects. Contract tasks include negotiating with landowners; drafting acquisition, transfer, and grant agreements; conducting due diligence; coordinating appraisal work; and preparing grant applications for acquisition funding. Additional tasks include supporting District staff in developing strategies associated with proactive solicitation of conservation projects. To address a need to provide progress and continuity on several acquisition projects, Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District proposes to amend this existing agreement to add \$150,000 for a total contract amount not to exceed \$300,000.

Discussion:

The Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District (Ag + Open Space) is committed to protecting the highest priority working and natural lands through the acquisition and long-term stewardship of existing and future conservation easements and/or fee title properties.

The need for consultant assistance with land acquisition projects is due to the variable nature of the Acquisition Program workload. Further, as we accelerate acquisition of the highest priority projects and initiate proactive conservation outreach, it is often difficult to predict or control the workload of the Acquisition Program as critical opportunities often present themselves at the most unexpected times. Multiple projects may require simultaneous time-sensitive work. Therefore, a professional services agreement provides support when Acquisition Program staff do not have the capacity to react to these opportunities in a timely manner due to existing project workload.

Staff at Singing Stream Conservation Consultants bring vast expertise in conservation easement transactions and land conservation strategy and policy. The principal is the former Vice President and Director of Land Protection for the Trust for Public Land (TPL), a national nonprofit organization. During her tenure at TPL the organization completed 1700 land and water protection projects in 44 states. These projects protected 1.5 million acres valued at over \$4 billion and included partnerships with foundations, local, state, and federal agencies. For these reasons, Ag + Open Space has selected Singing Stream as a single source consultant for a three-year contract for services as needed.

Strategic Plan:

N/A

Racial Equity:

N/A

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

No

Prior Board Actions:

July 18, 2023: Agreement with Singing Stream Conservation Consulting for Acquisition Strategy, Policy, and Transactions Approved

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 24-25 Adopted	FY 25-26 Projected	FY 26-27 Projected
Budgeted Expenses	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
Total Sources	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

This amount is appropriated in the FY24-45 budget and will be incorporated in future years' budgets.

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

N/A

Attachments:

1. First Amendment to Agreement with Singing Stream Conservation Consultants

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

None.