



SUMMARY REPORT

Agenda Date: 3/5/2024

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: Sheri Emerson, 707-565-7358
Vote Requirement: Majority
Supervisorial District(s): Countywide

Title:

As Needed Land Management Agreements

Recommended Action:

- A) Authorize the General Manager of the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District to execute seven service agreements for land management work on District-owned lands totaling \$800,000 effective for three years, as follows:
 - 1. An agreement with Conservation Corps North Bay, Inc., in an amount not-to-exceed \$75,000.
 - 2. An agreement with Hanford Applied Restoration & Conservation, in an amount not-to-exceed \$150,000.
 - 3. An agreement with Hybrid Incident Support, LLC, in an amount not-to-exceed \$75,000.
 - 4. An agreement with Pacific Watershed Associates, Inc. in an amount not-to-exceed \$100,000.
 - 5. An agreement with Prunuske Chatham, Inc., in an amount not-to-exceed \$150,000.
 - 6. An agreement with Steve Pye, sole proprietor in an amount not-to-exceed \$150,000.
 - 7. An agreement with WRA Landscape Restoration, Inc., in an amount not-to-exceed \$100,000.
- B) Delegate to the General Manager the authority to execute individual task orders under the Agreements.
- C) Delegate to the General Manager the authority to extend the term of the Agreements for two additional one-year periods by providing notice to the contractor.

Executive Summary:

Since 1990, the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District has protected over 123,000 acres across the county. Currently, the District owns and manages over 1,300 acres and holds conservation easements across almost 122,000 acres. Each property was acquired for a specific conservation purpose and must be stewarded in perpetuity to permanently protect the identified conservation values. In accordance with the Board-approved Stewardship Manual and Fee Lands Strategy, properties owned by Ag + Open Space may require maintenance, management, and occasional repair to protect the conservation values for which the lands were protected.

Contractor services are required to complete activities on District-owned properties, ranging from construction and maintenance of fencing, vegetation management, debris removal, road maintenance, fuel load suppression, erosion control, illegal *Cannabis* operation removal, invasive species management, and protection and enhancement of sensitive resources.

Seven service providers were selected pursuant to a request for proposals process to help satisfy this broad list of land management needs to safeguard the resources currently protected and to evaluate resources that should be protected into perpetuity.

Discussion:

Ag + Open Space's technical staff are assigned to three programs: Acquisition, Stewardship, and Community Resources. Each of these programs address specific technical needs with internal staff and resources. The depth and complexity of technical areas such as infrastructure maintenance, resource management, environmental impacts, conservation biology, protected species, erosion control, fire recovery, groundwater recharge, and economic evaluation of resources, among others, requires a robust and diverse set of skills and experience. Given the breadth and depth of expertise required for many of these projects, and the cyclical and unpredictable nature of the work, the most efficient use of taxpayer dollars at times is to enter into as-needed contracts with specialized outside resources that can focus on these issues and provide staff with a range of options and management recommendations. This allows staff to easily make thoughtful, well-informed, science-based decisions to protect and enhance the conservation values of Sonoma County.

Ag + Open Space requires a wide variety of services offered by more than one contractor. It is necessary to identify technical experts in areas of construction and maintenance of fencing, vegetation management, debris removal, road maintenance, fuel load suppression, erosion control, and other advanced fields. The proposed contracts will assist Ag + Open Space in managing fee title lands and connecting conservation efforts through strategic planning and analysis of the best available information from sources familiar with Sonoma County as well as sources used throughout the Bay Area and the Northern California region.

Ag + Open Space proposes seven as-needed three-year services agreements for a total amount not to exceed \$800,000.

The General Manager also requests authority to execute individual tasks orders and to extend the term of the Agreements for two additional one-year periods by providing notice to the contractor.

These contracts for various services are described in Attachment 1 (List of Contractors and Awards). Each firm submitted a proposal that was selected based on its ability to fulfill District needs in specific land management tasks, including but not limited to:

- Erosion control, road maintenance and repair;
- Fence construction and repair;
- Vegetation management, fire abatement, and fuel load reduction;
- Invasive plant and animal species removal;
- Hazardous materials and conditions remediation.

In some cases, the service provider is providing expertise across several land management service tasks.

Other service providers are more specialized, providing services in only one or two land management tasks.

Competitive Selection Process

The District conducted a Request for Proposals (RFP) process to identify and screen qualified contractors for the work described above. The work was divided into several specific land management tasks. The RFP was posted to the Supplier Portal, and event invitations sent to 716 suppliers. It was also advertised on the Ag + Open Space website and the County Purchasing Website. A total of 20 entities submitted proposals for this RFP. Using a set of selection criteria, an internal and external evaluation committee reviewed all the proposals, scored each according to the pre-established criteria, and then the top ranked candidates capable of satisfying the services needed were selected. The top-ranked candidates submitted responsive proposals that clearly addressed the needs of the District and thoughtfully responded to the elements described in the RFP.

Contract amounts were determined based on the anticipated need for various services across the Ag + Open Space protected lands portfolio during the next three years, and also the specific expertise of each contractor.

Once a land management need has been identified, staff will initiate a meeting to describe the District's needs under the as-needed agreements. Specific details of each work assignment will be determined during project initiation, including the specific project scope of work, schedule for completion of the project scope, cost estimate, and payment provisions. Staff will then prepare a Task Order to memorialize the agreement reached during project initiation or through the project cost estimate process. The Task Order must be signed by the District and the contractor prior to the onset of work. The District will not guarantee any minimum or maximum amount of work to be completed under the as-needed agreements. One advantage of selecting multiple service providers is the ability to request cost estimates to a pre-approved group of contractors in order to keep approved Task Orders competitive across many markets.

Local Preference, Local Experience

Six of seven the selected firms are located in Sonoma County, with significant experience working in our unique ecological landscapes, and offer a diverse set of skills. Hybrid Incident Support, Inc. is located in Willits and Red Bluff, CA, and were selected due to their extensive expertise in vegetation management, fire abatement and fuel load reduction - a service that has been identified as essential for managing District lands.

Strategic Plan:

This item directly supports the County's Five-year Strategic Plan and is aligned with the following pillar, goal, and objective.

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: By 2025, update the County General Plan and other county/special district planning documents to incorporate policy language and identify areas within the County that have the potential to maximize carbon sequestration and provide opportunities for climate change adaptation. The focus of these actions will be to increase overall landscape and species resiliency, reduce the risk of fire and floods, and address sea level rise and biodiversity loss.

Objective 5.2 Develop policies to maximize carbon sequestration and minimize loss of natural carbon sinks including old growth forests, the Laguna de Santa Rosa, and rangelands. Encourage agricultural

and open space land management to maximize sequestration. Develop a framework and policies to incentivize collaboration with private and public landowners.

Racial Equity:

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

No

INSTRUCTIONS: If 'Yes' to the above, or if equity analysis was conducted, include requisite information in this section staff's discussion, findings, and recommendations as it directly relates to this item's requested action(s).

Prior Board Actions:

March 16, 2021: Board approved eleven service agreements for As-Needed Maintenance, Repair, and Management Services on District-protected lands totaling \$400,000 effective for three years.

FISCAL SUMMARY

| Expenditures | FY 23-24 Adopted | FY 24-25 Projected | FY 25-26 Projected |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Budgeted Expenses | <u>\$300,000</u> | <u>\$300,000</u> | <u>\$200,000</u> |
| Additional Appropriation Requested | | | |
| Total Expenditures | <u>\$300,000</u> | <u>\$300,000</u> | <u>\$200,000</u> |
| Funding Sources | | | |
| General Fund/WA GF | | | |
| State/Federal | | | |
| Fees/Other | <u>\$300,000</u> \$ | <u>\$300,000</u> \$ | <u>\$200,000</u> \$ |
| Use of Fund Balance | | | |
| Contingencies | | | |
| Total Sources | <u>\$300,000</u> | <u>\$300,000</u> \$ | <u>\$200,000</u> |

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

This amount is appropriated in the FY 2023-2024 budget and will be incorporated in the projected year's budgets.

| Staffing Impacts: | | | |
|--|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Position Title (Payroll Classification) | Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step) | Additions (Number) | Deletions (Number) |
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Agenda Date: 3/5/2024

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

There are no impacts to staffing.

Attachments:

1. List of Consultants and Award
2. Professional Service Agreement with Conservation Corps North Bay
3. Professional Service Agreement with Hanford Applied Restoration & Conservation.
4. Professional Service Agreement with Hybrid Incident Support, LLC.
5. Professional Service Agreement with Pacific Watershed Associates, Inc.
6. Professional Service Agreement with Prunuske Chatham, Inc
7. Professional Service Agreement with Steve Pye, sole proprietor.
8. Professional Service Agreement with WRA Landscape Restoration, Inc.

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

None.