



## COUNTY OF SONOMA

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

### SUMMARY REPORT

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**Agenda Date:** 7/8/2025

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**To:** Board of Directors, Sonoma County Water Agency  
**Department or Agency Name(s):** Sonoma County Water Agency  
**Staff Name and Phone Number:** Trisha Meisler 707-547-1926  
**Vote Requirement:** Majority  
**Supervisory District(s):** Countywide

**Title:**

Update and Implement an Energy Education Program with Sonoma Clean Power Authority

**Recommended Action:**

Authorize Sonoma County Water Agency's General Manager to execute an agreement with Sonoma Clean Power Authority, in substantially the form as the draft presented to this Board, for Sonoma County Water Agency to update and implement an Energy Education Program through June 30, 2027, in the amount of \$600,000 (Sonoma Clean Power Authority is paying Sonoma County Water Agency) and, consistent with other agreements, authorize Sonoma County Water Agency's General Manager to amend or terminate this agreement with approval of County Counsel.

**Executive Summary:**

Sonoma County Water Agency's (Sonoma Water) Water Education Program reaches roughly 13,000 students annually, providing field trips and classroom visits. This item requests authorization for Sonoma Water to enter into an agreement with Sonoma Clean Power Authority (Authority) to continue implementing the Energy Education Program.

**Discussion:**

**HISTORY OF ITEM/BACKGROUND**

Sonoma Water's Water Education Program is an expansive program with established connections to teachers in schools throughout Sonoma and Marin counties. Teachers consistently apply for and provide excellent reviews of field and classroom programs, workshops, and assemblies. The classroom programs are aligned to current "Next Generation Science Standards," which are a multi-state effort designed to improve science education for all students.

As one of the largest energy users in Sonoma County, Sonoma Water became carbon neutral by 2015. Sonoma Water achieved carbon neutral status, but climate change and energy efficiency remain high priorities for Sonoma Water. In 2011, the Water Education Program began including topics about climate change and the water/energy nexus. In 2023 Sonoma Water's Board of Directors approved an Energy and Climate Resiliency Policy which guides Sonoma Water's efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and respond to climate risks.

California's landmark climate action law, Assembly Bill 32, aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions statewide to 80% below 1990 levels by 2050. The County's Five-Year Strategic Plan's Climate Action and Resiliency Pillar

establishes a goal of making Sonoma County carbon neutral by 2030. Statewide, 20% of energy use involves treating and transporting water. Sonoma Water adopted its Climate Action Plan in 2021, with one of its key objectives to improve the understanding of the relationship between climate variability and change and regional water supply, flood management, and sanitation systems. By offering energy education programs, Sonoma Water connects teachers with locally-based curriculum and teaches students about the water/energy nexus, the transition to renewable energy, energy efficiency, and the impacts of climate change. Hands-on, science-based energy and water education programs allow students to become informed and accountable citizens who can help create a more climate resilient future.

Sonoma Water sought partners to offset the costs of developing energy education programs and has collaborated with Authority to develop a scope of work for the Energy Education Program.

#### **SERVICES TO BE PERFORMED FOR AUTHORITY BY SONOMA WATER**

Under the proposed agreement, Authority will pay Sonoma Water to update and implement the Energy Education Program. Services to be provided under the agreement include the following:

- Market energy education programs in print, digitally via social media, and on Sonoma Water's website
- Implement musical assembly to increase awareness on topics related to water and energy
- Continue to refine, update, and implement elementary school education programs
- Provide free school supplies to teachers with Authority's logo and messaging
- Refine and implement middle and secondary school education programs
- Refine and deliver lessons for extracurricular education events
- Implement a small grants program (A Call to Action) to provide funds for teachers and their students to carry out solutions-based projects that address a water or energy related environmental challenge in their community. Authority and Sonoma Water will each pay one-half of the cost of providing up to ten \$1,000 awards each year.
- Continue to incorporate content on the nexus between water and energy into Sonoma Water's fifth grade program entitled Water Connects Us All
- Conduct climate literacy teacher summer workshops in 2026 and 2027
- Develop monthly summaries and end-of-year reports

Under the agreement, Sonoma Water will invoice Authority for services at the same rates Sonoma Water allocates to its internal projects and programs up to a maximum of \$600,000. Sonoma Water is recovering its actual costs of providing services to Authority with no mark-up. This agreement covers services rendered from July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2027.

Funding for costs under the agreement after July 1, 2025, is subject to approval by Authority's Board of Directors of a budget including such funding. Authority may terminate the agreement if such funding is not approved.

#### **REQUEST FOR SONOMA WATER GENERAL MANAGER AMENDMENT AND TERMINATION AUTHORITY**

Consistent with other agreements, staff recommend that the Board authorize Sonoma Water's General Manager to amend or terminate the agreement with approval of County Counsel.

**County of Sonoma Strategic Plan Alignment:**  
N/A

**Sonoma Water Strategic Plan Alignment:**

N/A

**Racial Equity:**

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

No

**Prior Board Actions:**

- 07/11/2023: Board approved agreement between Sonoma Water and Sonoma Clean Power Authority to update and implement an energy education program. Cost \$600,000; term end June 30, 2025.
- 07/20/2021: Board approved agreement between Sonoma Water and Sonoma Clean Power Authority to update and implement an energy education program. Cost \$600,000; term end June 30, 2023.
- 08/13/2019: Board approved agreement between Sonoma Water and Sonoma Clean Power Authority to develop and implement an energy education program. Cost \$550,000; term end June 30, 2021.

**FISCAL SUMMARY**

<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>FY25-26 Adopted</b>	<b>FY26-27 Projected</b>	<b>FY27-28 Projected</b>
Budgeted Expenses	\$300,000	\$300,000	
Additional Appropriation Requested			
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$300,000</b>	<b>\$300,000</b>	
<b>Funding Sources</b>			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other	\$300,000	\$300,000	
Use of Fund Balance			
General Fund Contingencies			
<b>Total Sources</b>	<b>\$300,000</b>	<b>\$300,000</b>	

**Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:**

Budgeted amount of \$300,000 is available from FY 2025/2026 appropriations for the Sustainability and Renewable Energy fund. FY 2026/2027 appropriations will be budgeted in that fiscal year. Offsetting revenue in the amount of \$600,000 will come from Sonoma Clean Power Authority.

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

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**Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):**

N/A

**Attachments:**

Attachment: Agreement with Sonoma Clean Power Authority

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

None.