



COUNTY OF SONOMA

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

SUMMARY REPORT

Agenda Date: 6/3/2025

To: Board of Directors, Sonoma County Water Agency
Department or Agency Name(s): Sonoma County Water Agency
Staff Name and Phone Number: Dale Roberts 707-547-1979
Vote Requirement: Majority
Supervisory District(s): Countywide

Title:

Advanced Quantitative Precipitation Information C-Band Radar at Mt. Barnabe Contract Award

Recommended Action:

- A) Adopt and approve the Project Manual and Drawings ("plans and specifications") entitled "Advanced Quantitative Precipitation Information C-Band Radar at Mt. Barnabe."
- B) Award a contract to Ghilotti Construction Co. for \$515,860 for construction of Advanced Quantitative Precipitation Information C-Band Radar at Mt. Barnabe and authorize the Chair to execute the contract.
- C) Authorize the General Manager of Sonoma County Water Agency to sign Section 00 65 23 (Agreement and Release of Any and All Claims), with County Counsel review, if any unresolved claims are listed by the contractor.
- D) Authorize the General Manager of Sonoma County Water Agency to waive Section 00 67 00 (Escrow Bid Documents).

Executive Summary:

This item requests approval of a contract with Ghilotti Construction Co. for \$515,860 for construction of Advanced Quantitative Precipitation Information C-Band Radar at Mt. Barnabe. Approval of this contract entails adopting and approving the plans and specifications and awarding the construction contract. This item also authorizes the General Manager to approve the release unless the contractor lists unresolved claims and to waive the requirement in 00 67 00 Escrow Bid Documents. The project will construct the infrastructure needed to deploy and operate a Department of Water Resources-funded weather radar to track precipitation direction, speed, and intensity as part of the Advanced Quantitative Precipitation Information project.

Discussion:

For more than 14 years, Sonoma Water and several other agencies in the Bay Area have collaborated with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Colorado State University's Cooperative Institute for Research in the Atmosphere, the United States Geological Survey - Pacific Coast and Marine Science Center, and the Center for Western Weather and Water Extremes at Scripps Institute of Oceanography, to develop a regional project called the "San Francisco Bay Area Advanced Quantitative Precipitation Information System" (Project).

The Project is a multi-year effort to provide improved precipitation and hydrologic information to water agencies, flood control agencies, wastewater agencies, and other entities in the San Francisco Bay area to

assist in mitigating flood hazards, maximizing water supply, improving emergency response times, and enhancing ecosystem services. The Project includes deployment and installation of four X-Band radars throughout the region and a single C-Band radar with a goal of improving short-term (48-hour) monitoring and prediction of high-impact rainfall events.

Sonoma County Water Agency (Sonoma Water) was awarded \$19.84 million in funds in August 2016 from the Department of Water Resources statewide Proposition 84 (The Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006) grant to implement the San Francisco Bay Area Advanced Quantitative Precipitation Information System project. Costs incurred by Sonoma Water in implementing the Project will be partly reimbursed with these grant funds.

The C-Band radar equipment on Mt. Barnabe is grant funded. The structural and electrical infrastructure needed for the radar will be funded by Sonoma Water with contributions from other San Francisco Bay Area water, flood, wastewater, and emergency managers. Sonoma Water staff plan to return to the Board for authority to enter into a cooperative agreement with other bay area water/wastewater/flood control agencies that would contribute to help cover these infrastructure costs.

The installation of the C-Band radar on Mt. Barnabe is critical to the success of the Project since having a weather radar cover the region offshore of Marin, Sonoma, and Mendocino counties will greatly enhance situational awareness of the severity of incoming precipitation events and help forecasters more precisely determine where atmospheric rivers will make landfall, as well as the elevation, speed, width, and direction of travel of atmospheric rivers. This offshore region is "upstream" of the Bay Area and is often the path of extreme precipitation from the Pacific Ocean to the greater San Francisco region. Further, the National Weather Service NEXRAD radar network cannot observe precipitation well in this offshore area. The Mt. Barnabe C-Band radar's detection of precipitation in the lower elevations typical of atmospheric rivers would remedy a blind spot of the NEXRAD radar network.

The Project consists of installation of a weather radar system located on Mt. Barnabe near Dickson Fire Lookout in an unincorporated area of Marin County, under a lease agreement that Sonoma Water entered with County of Marin. The Work includes installation of a weather radar (furnished by the Department of Water Resources) and corresponding power source, electrical instrumentation and controls, and standby power system. The work also includes grading, trenching, and construction of a concrete foundation.

Sonoma Water's estimate for this work was \$600,000. The Project was advertised for bids on March 6, 2025.

On April 10, 2025, two responsive bids were received per the attached Bid Summary. The lowest responsive and responsible bid is from Ghilotti Construction Co. and is \$84,140 below Sonoma Water's estimate. Ghilotti Construction Co. is experienced in this type of construction and met the experience requirements.

A contractor must execute a release of claims (Section 00 65 23) before final payment but may except any unresolved claims from the release. The requested action authorizes the General Manager to approve the release unless the contractor lists unresolved claims. In that case, County Counsel must review Section 00 65 23 prior to General Manager approval.

Section 00 67 00 (Escrow Bid Documents) of the Project Manual requires that the contractor submit bid

preparation documents into an escrow account at a mutually agreeable institution. The documents would be available later for review by Sonoma County Water Agency (Sonoma Water) and contractor in case of a dispute. Sonoma Water staff has determined that this procedure is unnecessary for this Project and, after evaluation of the documents, Sonoma Water staff finds nothing out of the ordinary, and recommends that the Board authorize the General Manager of Sonoma Water to waive this requirement.

Construction on the Project is scheduled to begin approximately July 7, 2025 with an estimated completion date of Feb 1, 2026.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

The General Manager has determined that the Project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15303(d), New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures; and 15304(a)(f), Minor Alterations to Land because entering into a lease agreement to allow the construction, installation, operation and maintenance of a weather radar station and appurtenances would result in grading, minor trenching and backfilling within previously disturbed areas where surfaces would be restored and does not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees. The Project would not impact a scenic or historical resource or degrade the quality of the environment and would not result in any significant or cumulative adverse effect upon the environment. Sonoma Water staff prepared a Notice of Exemption (NOE) for the Project in accordance with CEQA, the State CEQA Guidelines and Sonoma Water's Procedure for the Implementation of CEQA and the NOE was filed on April 5, 2023.

County of Sonoma Strategic Plan:

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

Pillar: Resilient Infrastructure

Goal: Goal 5: Support, fund, and expand flood protection.

Objective: Objective 1: Develop partnerships with cities, tribal governments, and private organizations regarding flood protection and sustainability to identify gaps and address climate change impacts.

Sonoma Water Strategic Plan Alignment

This item directly supports Sonoma Water's Strategic Plan and is aligned with the following goal, strategy, and action item.

Goal: 5. Climate Change - Assess risk and uncertainty of climate change, and develop and take actions that improve resiliency and sustainability.

Strategy: 5.1 Develop and implement practices to understand and minimize vulnerability to climate change impacts.

Action Item: 5.1.2 Support interagency partnership efforts addressing regional climate-resiliency planning and projects.

The Project supports Sonoma County's efforts to partner with other local entities to prepare, mitigate, and prevent community impacts caused by emergencies and natural disasters including, but not limited to, flood protection and other adverse effects from heavy precipitation events.

Racial Equity:

Agenda Date: 6/3/2025

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

No

Prior Board Actions:

Attached

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY24-25 Adopted	FY25-26 Projected	FY26-27 Projected
Budgeted Expenses	\$515,860		
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures	\$515,860		
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF	\$515,860		
State/Federal			
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
General Fund Contingencies			
Total Sources	\$515,860		

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

Total budgeted amount of \$515,860 is available from FY 24/25 appropriations in the Sonoma Water General Fund. No additional appropriations are required. Sonoma Water is negotiating a cost share agreement with many San Francisco Bay Area water, flood, wastewater, and emergency managers for the Advanced Quantitative Precipitation Information C-Band Radar at Mt. Barnabe Project to reimburse Sonoma Water for project management, design, construction management, and construction costs. An agreement will be brought to the Board for approval after negotiations are complete.

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

N/A

Attachments:

Attachment 1: Bid Summary

Attachment 2: Prior Board Actions

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

Project Manual and Drawings