



## COUNTY OF SONOMA

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

### SUMMARY REPORT

---

**Agenda Date:** 8/22/2023

---

**To:** Board of Directors, Sonoma County Water Agency  
**Department or Agency Name(s):** Sonoma County Water Agency  
**Staff Name and Phone Number:** Ann DuBay 521-1164  
**Vote Requirement:** Majority  
**Supervisory District(s):** Countywide

**Title:**

Russian River Watershed Program and Sonoma County Watersheds Program

**Recommended Action:**

- A) Authorize Sonoma County Water Agency's General Manager to execute the Fourth Amended Agreement for Funding of Russian River Watershed Program with Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District, in a form approved by County Counsel, to continue to provide watershed health education and groundwater outreach. The amended agreement increases the amount by \$100,000 and extends the agreement term two years for a new not-to-exceed agreement total of \$387,000 and end date of August 31, 2025.
- B) Authorize Sonoma County Water Agency's General Manager to execute the Second Amended and Restated Agreement for Funding of Sonoma County Watersheds Program with Sonoma Resource Conservation District, in a form approved by County Counsel, to continue to conduct landowner outreach activities and provide funding development for watershed health and habitat restoration. The second amended agreement increases the amount by \$120,000 and extends the agreement term two years for a new not-to-exceed agreement total of \$360,000 and end date of August 31, 2025.

**Executive Summary:**

This item requests authority for Sonoma County Water Agency's (Sonoma Water) General Manager to execute a fourth amended agreement with Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District (Gold Ridge RCD) to add two years and \$100,000 to continue providing groundwater sustainability planning, reporting and education, and collaboration within the community to restore resources and improve water quality and habitat. In addition, Gold Ridge RCD will continue to conduct landowner outreach activities, water quality testing in tributary streams, and develop grants that could fund salmonid restoration projects to help improve Russian River watershed conditions.

This item also requests authority for Sonoma Water's General Manager to execute a second amended agreement with Sonoma Resource Conservation District (Sonoma RCD) to add two years and \$120,000 to continue providing landowner assistance, public education and information, watershed stewardship, watershed monitoring, interagency coordination and resource enhancement, and planning and implementation to assist local groups in improving land management and restoring fish habitat.

**Discussion:**

HISTORY OF ITEM/BACKGROUND

Sonoma Water has a long history of partnerships with local Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs) to provide technical and landowner assistance, public education and information, watershed stewardship, watershed monitoring, interagency coordination, resource enhancement, and planning assistance to local groups to help improve land management and restore fish habitat. The purpose of the subject funding agreements is to expand knowledge on the critical connection between landowner activities and the impacts on local creeks, streams, and other water bodies.

As legal subdivisions of the State of California, Gold Ridge RCD and Sonoma RCD are organized to support natural resource management solutions through partnerships with individuals, organizations, and agencies.

The RCDs are uniquely qualified to work directly with landowners with nonregulatory, cooperative agreements, and are a trusted source of accurate and useful information.

### **Partnership between Sonoma Water and Gold Ridge RCD**

Gold Ridge RCD's service area consists of 134,000 acres of diverse resources including streams, coastal areas, rangeland, woodland life and fisheries habitat, vineyards, orchards, and cropland, as well as rural and urban areas located in the Russian River and Bodega Bay watersheds.

Since 2001, Gold Ridge RCD has received funding from Sonoma Water to implement the Russian River Watershed Program in order to provide landowner assistance, public education and information, watershed stewardship, and assistance to local groups in providing land management and restoring fish habitat.

Sonoma Water and Gold Ridge RCD worked cooperatively on past fishery resource-related projects including instream habitat improvement projects on Dutch Bill, Green Valley, Purrington, Atascadero, Redwood, and Freezeout creeks; coordinating water quality sampling on Dutch Bill Creek; and riparian planting and erosion control work on Purrington, Green Valley, and Dutch Bill creeks.

Sonoma Water's work with and partial funding of Gold Ridge RCD benefits the communities Sonoma Water serves by allowing Gold Ridge RCD to carry out components of its annual work-plan, including salmonid restoration, improvements to tributary streams, and education for landowners on streams that support the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's Coho, Captive Broodstock Program. In addition, it is beneficial to Gold Ridge RCD to work with Sonoma Water to conduct Russian River Watershed restoration activities.

Sonoma Water and Gold Ridge RCD entered into an agreement for funding of the Russian River Watershed Program on October 25, 2017, in the amount of \$60,000 and term end date of August 31, 2019.

The first amended agreement, approved by the Board on September 11, 2018, expanded the scope to include groundwater sustainability planning and reporting, and increased the amount by \$27,000 to fund the additional work for a new Agreement total of \$87,000. There was no change to the term end date.

The second amended agreement, approved by the Board on September 17, 2019, increased the amount by \$100,000, expanded the scope of work to include additional watersheds, and added two years for a new Agreement total of \$187,000 and end date of August 31, 2021.

The third amended agreement, approved by the Board on July 13, 2021, increased the amount by \$100,000

and extended the agreement term two years for a new agreement total of \$287,000 and end date of August 31, 2023, to continue to provide watershed health education and outreach and for Gold Ridge RCD to participate in the implementation of groundwater sustainability plans.

Sonoma Water and Gold Ridge RCD wish to continue the funding and work under this agreement.

#### **Partnership between Sonoma Water and Sonoma RCD**

Since 1946, the Sonoma RCD has facilitated natural resource conservation through community involvement, education, technical expertise and scientific research. The district covers 919,000 acres, or more than 85 percent of Sonoma County, and includes the Russian River, Petaluma River, Sonoma Creek, Stemple Creek, and Gualala River Watersheds.

Sonoma RCD's mission includes water quality protection, restoration of fish and wildlife habitat, conservation of water resources, and drought and changing climate strategies.

In 2013 Southern Sonoma RCD and Sotoyome RCD merged to form Sonoma RCD. Sonoma Water has a long history of partnership with these entities providing funding to advance the Sonoma County Watersheds Program.

Sonoma Water's work with and funding of Sonoma RCD improves Sonoma Water's understanding of watershed conditions; creates opportunities to educate agricultural and urban communities about key issues, including groundwater, water conservation, stormwater and rainwater catchment, and development of habitat enhancement; and enhances Sonoma Water's goals of protecting water quality, improving watershed health, and building community partnerships. In addition, it is beneficial for Sonoma RCD to work with Sonoma Water to carry out restoration activities.

Sonoma Water and Sonoma RCD entered into an agreement for funding of the Sonoma County Watershed Program on September 29, 2019, in the amount of \$120,000 and term end date of August 31, 2021.

The first amended and restated agreement, approved by the Board on July 13, 2021, increased the amount by \$120,000, and extended the agreement term two years for a new agreement total of \$240,000 and end date of August 31, 2023, to continue to conduct landowner outreach activities and provide funding development for watershed health and habitat restoration.

Sonoma Water and Sonoma RCD wish to continue the funding and work under this agreement.

#### **SERVICES TO BE PERFORMED**

##### **Amended Agreement between Sonoma Water and Gold Ridge RCD**

Under the amended agreement, Gold Ridge RCD will continue to conduct landowner outreach activities, water quality testing in tributary streams, and develop grants that could fund salmonid restoration projects to help improve Russian River Watershed conditions. In addition, recent changes to regional groundwater management call for closer coordination with landowners living within the Santa Rosa Plain Groundwater Basin. Gold Ridge RCD will serve as a liaison to those communities and contribute to the implementation of the Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the Santa Rosa Plain Groundwater Basin.

---

**Agenda Date:** 8/22/2023

---

Amending the agreement is necessary for Gold Ridge RCD to continue Russian River Watershed Program services including groundwater sustainability planning, reporting, watershed health education, landowner outreach, and grants development to help improve Russian River watershed conditions.

The additional cost is \$100,000, for a new not-to-exceed agreement total of \$387,000. The new end date is August 31, 2025.

The amended agreement includes two options for Sonoma Water to extend the term for a period of one year each by providing written notice to Gold Ridge RCD thirty days in advance of the expiration date of the amended agreement and of the first extension option. The extension will be formalized in an amended agreement or amendment signed by Sonoma Water and Gold Ridge RCD.

#### **Amended Agreement between Sonoma Water and Sonoma RCD**

Under the amended agreement, Sonoma RCD will continue to conduct landowner outreach activities and assistance, provide educational materials to sub-watershed groups and residents in the Russian River, Petaluma, and Sonoma Valley watersheds, and provide funding development for watershed health and habitat restoration.

Amending the agreement is necessary for Sonoma RCD to continue Sonoma County Watersheds Program services including landowner outreach activities and funding development for watershed health and habitat restoration.

The additional cost is \$120,000, for a new not-to-exceed agreement total of \$360,000. The new end date is August 31, 2025.

The amended agreement includes two options for Sonoma Water to extend the term for a period of one year each by providing written notice to Sonoma RCD thirty days in advance of the expiration date of the amended agreement and of the first extension option. The extension will be formalized in an amended agreement or amendment signed by Sonoma Water and Sonoma RCD.

#### **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:**

07/13/2021: Approved third amended agreement between Sonoma Water and Gold Ridge RCD for funding of Russian River Watershed Program. Cost \$287,000; term end August 31, 2023.

07/13/2021: Approved first amended agreement between Sonoma Water and Sonoma RCD for funding of Sonoma County Watersheds Program. Cost \$240,000; term end date August 31, 2023.

09/17/2019: Approved second amended agreement between Sonoma Water and Gold Ridge RCD for

---

**Agenda Date:** 8/22/2023

---

funding of Russian River Watershed Program. New cost \$187,000; new term end August 31, 2021.

09/17/2019: Approved agreement between Sonoma Water and Sonoma RCD for funding of Sonoma County Watersheds Program. Cost \$120,000; term end August 31, 2021.

09/11/2018: Approved first amended agreement between Sonoma Water and Gold Ridge RCD for funding of Russian River Watershed Program. New cost \$87,000; no change to term end date.

09/19/2017: Approved agreement between Sonoma Water and Gold Ridge RCD for funding of Russian River Watershed Program. Cost \$60,000; term end August 31, 2019.

#### **FISCAL SUMMARY**

<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>FY 23-24 Adopted</b>	<b>FY 24-25 Projected</b>	<b>FY 25-26 Projected</b>
Budgeted Expenses	\$110,000	\$110,000	
Additional Appropriation Requested			
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$110,000</b>	<b>\$110,000</b>	
<b>Funding Sources</b>			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other	\$110,000	\$110,000	
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
<b>Total Sources</b>	<b>\$110,000</b>	<b>\$110,000</b>	

#### **Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:**

Amended Agreement between Sonoma Water and Gold Ridge RCD

Budgeted amount of \$50,000 is available from FY 2023/2024 appropriations for the Russian River Projects fund. FY 2024/2025 appropriations will be budgeted in that fiscal year.

Amended Agreement between Sonoma Water and Sonoma RCD

Budgeted amount of \$60,000 is available from FY 2023/2024 for Russian River Projects fund. FY 2024/2025 appropriations will be budgeted in that fiscal year.

<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>

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

N/A

---

**Agenda Date:** 8/22/2023

---

**Attachments:**

None.

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

None.