



SUMMARY REPORT

Agenda Date: 10/13/2020

To: Sonoma County Board of Supervisors

Department or Agency Name(s): Permit and Resource Management Department, Department of Transportation and Public Works, and Regional Parks

Staff Name and Phone Number: Oriana Hart, 565-6186

Vote Requirement: 4/5th

Supervisory District(s): First and Second

Title:

Environmental Protection Agency Grant for the Southern Sonoma County Water Quality Improvement and Wetland Restoration Project

Recommended Action:

- A) Authorize the Director of the Permit and Resource Management Department (Permit Sonoma) to accept grant funds from the Environmental Protection Agency San Francisco Bay Water Quality Improvement Fund for drainage, storm water, and restoration activities (\$1,055,323) and execute all documents necessary to carry out and administer the grant.
- B) Adopt a resolution adjusting the Sonoma County Permit Sonoma Fiscal Year 2020-21 Budget by \$1,055,323. (First and Second) (4/5th)

Executive Summary:

Approval of this item would authorize Permit Sonoma to accept grant funds to offset costs associated with the implementation of Federal and State ordered storm water regulatory permit requirements for the period October 1, 2020 through December 31, 2024. Additionally, these grant funds will be used to create two restoration projects in the Sonoma Valley and offset the cost of training for environmental staff.

Each year Sonoma County is required to perform and report on State mandated actions and measurable goals under National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permits to reduce impacts to water quality due to storm water runoff. Permit Sonoma collaborates with Sonoma County Transportation and Public Works, Sonoma County Regional Parks, and other partner organizations to attain these goals. Specific actions are required for watersheds that drain to the San Francisco Bay. To fund that work, Permit Sonoma is receiving grant funding in the amount of \$1,055,323 from the EPA San Francisco Bay Water Quality Improvement Fund. The EPA awarded the funding on September 15, 2020. This item requests authorization for the Director of Permit Sonoma to administer the grant.

Specific tasks that will be accomplished under the grant include: 1) repair primary sediment sources in Petaluma River watershed; 2) track progress toward Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) and other watershed health targets; 3) provide environmental training for staff and the community to conduct wetland assessments; 4) create a vernal pool restoration in Sonoma Valley Regional Park; 5) create an in-stream restoration project in Sonoma Creek to increase flood capacity; and 6) project management. Please see the

attached Southern Sonoma County Water Quality Improvement Workplan, including maps of project areas. [Attachment 3.]

Section 402(p) of the Federal Clean Water Act requires NPDES permits for storm discharges from municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s). The San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board (Water Board) authorized General Permit coverage for storm water discharges for Small MS4s (Phase II communities) in Sonoma County by Water Quality Order No. 2013-0001-DWQ NPDES General Permit No. CAS000004 (Permit Order). Permit Sonoma administers the County MS4 permit and manages and performs the mandated storm water program activities.

The Permit Order requires compliance with all applicable TMDLs. TMDLs are numerical calculations of the maximum amount of pollutants that the Petaluma River and Sonoma Creek can assimilate and still meet the San Francisco Bay Basin Plan water quality standards. These TMDL requirements include monitoring and testing for sediment and pathogens.

Discussion:

The EPA San Francisco Bay Water Quality Improvement Fund offers funding grants for projects supporting and restoring the San Francisco Bay. On May 5 2020, Permit Sonoma Environmental Resources staff submitted the grant application titled Southern Sonoma Water Quality Improvement and Wetland Restoration to the EPA. The grant was awarded in the amount of \$1,055,323 to help the County fund its efforts to improve water quality, meet the TMDL and NPDES permit requirements, and develop restoration and flood capacity projects over a four-year period beginning October 1, 2020.

If approved, Permit Sonoma will administer the grant and water quality improvement work on behalf of the project partners, Sonoma County Transportation and Public Works, Sonoma County Regional Parks, and in partnerships with the Sonoma Ecology Center, the Laguna Foundation, and the San Francisco Estuary Institute. Administrative responsibilities include demonstrating compliance with the grant provisions and quarterly financial and narrative reporting and invoicing. Administrative costs will be paid for through the grant.

Sonoma Ecology Center joined the County of Sonoma in this grant proposal. If approved by your Board, staff will return to Board next week with the proposed contract with Sonoma Ecology Center to distribute the funds as authorized in the grant award.

Prior Board Actions:

04/07/2015: The Board authorized acceptance of a \$991,119 grant from the same EPA San Francisco Bay Water Quality Improvement Fund and delegated its administration to the Permit Sonoma Director.

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 20-21 Adopted	FY21-22 Projected	FY 22-23 Projected
Budgeted Expenses			
Additional Appropriation Requested	\$267,871	\$267,871	\$267,871
Total Expenditures	\$267,871	\$267,871	\$267,871

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Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal	\$267,871	\$267,871	\$267,871
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
Total Sources	\$267,871	\$267,871	\$267,871

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

This one-time grant will assist Permit Sonoma in covering costs associated with the Federal and State Ordered Storm Water regulatory permit and TMDL requirements over the course of four years. The funds received will be included in FY 2020-21 and subsequent budgets.

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

N/A

Attachments:

Attachment 1: Resolution Authorizing Budget Adjustment

Attachment 2: EPA Grant Award Letter

Attachment 3: Southern Sonoma County Water Quality Improvement Approved Workplan

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

EPA Grant Agreement