



## SUMMARY REPORT

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**Agenda Date:** 10/26/2021

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**To:** Board of Supervisors of Sonoma County and Board of Directors of Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District

**Department or Agency Name(s):** County Administrator's Office and Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District

**Staff Name and Phone Number:** Anna Yip 565-2132

**Vote Requirement:** Majority

**Supervisorial District(s):** Countywide

**Title:**

Sonoma County Natural Systems Climate Resilience and Adaptation Plan

**Recommended Action:**

- A) Authorize the County Administrator to execute a professional services agreement with Eastern Research Group, Inc. for \$146,627 to create a Sonoma County Natural Systems Climate Resilience and Adaptation Plan.
- B) Authorize Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District to contribute up to \$74,000 towards completion of the Sonoma County Natural Systems Climate Resilience and Adaptation Plan.

**Executive Summary:**

Extreme droughts, floods, wildfires, and other effects of climate change are already impacting Sonoma County, and larger threats lie ahead. Natural systems have the potential to significantly mitigate and aid in adaptation to climate change, but focused actions must be taken to optimize these functions. Sonoma County, situated at the frontlines of some of the most threatening impacts from climate change, has been a leader in climate action and resiliency. Now, the region needs a natural systems climate resilience and adaptation plan to best inform County departments, agencies, local land managers and owners, and community organizations on the necessary next steps to effectively and efficiently adapt to the impacts of the climate crisis.

The Climate Action and Resiliency Division (CARD) in the County Administrator's Office, in coordination with Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District (Ag + Open Space), requests your Board to approve a contract and associated funding for the term October 26, 2021 to April 30, 2022 for \$146,627 with Eastern Research Group, Inc. (ERG) to create this natural systems climate resiliency and adaptation plan (Plan). Specifically, the Plan will propose and prioritize projects/implementation steps throughout the entire geographic area of Sonoma County. The Plan will be used by public and private land conservation organizations to identify and prioritize land conservation efforts and by land managing and owning entities to best adapt their lands in the face of climate change. These entities will be able to use the Plan to more easily and readily apply for future State, Federal and other funding dedicated to climate adaptation likely to become available in the coming year, such as from FEMA, the Departments of Interior and Agriculture, and the State of California. This includes new pots of climate resilience and wildfire money that will be in the bipartisan infrastructure bill and the budget reconciliation bill.

Contract activities will be managed by both the CAO and Ag + Open Space. The CAO will perform contract administration responsibilities.

**Discussion:**

The County of Sonoma issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) on August 27, 2021. The RFP closed on September 17, 2021 with 7 proposals received. The County asked proposers to demonstrate their ability to complete a natural systems climate adaptation plan as described in the RFP that is clear, effective, and could be used to apply for future funding. The full evaluation criteria used to rank all proposals can be found on page 11 of the “Sonoma County Climate Resiliency and Adaptation Plan”. The evaluation committee comprised of:

- Caryl Hart, Climate Consultant at Ag + Open Space
- Melanie Parker, Deputy Director at Sonoma County Regional Parks (Regional Parks)
- BC Capps, Climate Change Program Analyst at Regional Climate Protection Authority (RCPA)
- Susan Haydon, Project Manager at Sonoma County Water Agency (Sonoma Water)
- Anna Yip, Climate Analyst at CAO CARD

Representatives from Regional Parks, RCPA and Sonoma Water were included in the evaluation committee as these entities will benefit from the Plan and would provide useful end-user perspective to the selection process.

The contract managers from both CARD and Ag + Open Space will oversee the development of the Plan. They will ensure that related existing initiatives, efforts and planning documents (such as the County of Sonoma’s 5-year Strategic Plan, Ag + Open Space’s Vital Lands Initiative, and RCPA’s Climate Mobilization Strategy) will be considered and incorporated, as appropriate, by the contractor. They will also oversee stakeholder engagement throughout the process to ensure that the Plan is developed with the end-user in mind. The final Plan will be shared widely with the public, with specific outreach to land conservation, land management/land owner groups, local jurisdictions, and local environmental community-based organizations and non-profits.

The full RFP is “On File” with the Clerk of the Board, titled “Sonoma County Climate Resiliency and Adaptation Plan RFP” and the negotiated contract with the successful bidder has been attached here, as Attachment A.

**Eastern Research Group, Inc.:**

ERG is well equipped for this project, given their experience working at the intersection of resilience, conservation, equity, and land use in California and the Bay Area, in particular. Some of their recent projects demonstrating this expertise include developing the City of Alameda Climate Action and Resiliency Plan, providing strategic communication and technical support for Sonoma Water’s forecast informed reservoir operations (FIRO) project in the Russian River Watershed, and playing an instrumental role in the Bay Conservation and Development Commission’s (BCDC’s) Adapting to Rising Tides planning process. ERG is a primary contractor supporting the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s (NOAA) National Weather Service (NWS) and has been supporting NOAA on hazard risk communication and climate resiliency for more than 10 years. ERG also has experience working with potential funders, such as foundations (National Fish and Wildlife Foundation) and state and federal funding agencies.

ERG was selected by the evaluation committee because of their demonstrated understanding of the County’s request and their related experience in developing similar adaptation, mitigation, and climate action plans for local governments.

**Prior Board Actions:**

None

**FISCAL SUMMARY**

<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>FY 21-22 Adopted</b>	<b>FY22-23 Projected</b>	<b>FY 23-24 Projected</b>
Budgeted Expenses	\$146,627		
Additional Appropriation Requested			
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	\$146,627		
<b>Funding Sources</b>			
General Fund/WA GF	\$73,314		
State/Federal			
Fees/Other	73,313		
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
<b>Total Sources</b>	\$146,627		

**Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:**

The cost of this activity will be split between the CAO and Ag +Open Space. The contract will be funded by CAO's CARD and Ag + Open Space funds. The two will be splitting the cost evenly. Since the CAO's CARD team will be the lead on administering the contract, expenditures will be increased for CARD to include the funds coming from Ag + Open Space via the Quarter 1 consolidated budget adjustment process. ERG will bill CARD on a quarterly basis.

The described scope of work shall be completed by ERG at an estimated cost of \$146,627. The budget is broken down in the tables below.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Rate</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Senior Professional	\$229.25/hr	270	\$61,899
Mid-Level Professional	\$119.29/hr	315	\$37,577
Junior Professional	\$76.29/hr	504	\$38,450
Subcontractors	\$79.62/hr	105	\$8,360
Mileage	\$0.56/mile	610	\$341
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$146,627</b>

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

None

**Attachments:**

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Attachment A: Contract and Exhibits

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

Sonoma County Climate Resilience and Adaptation Plan RFP