



Legislation Text

File #: 2023-0369, **Version:** 1

To: Board of Directors, Sonoma County Water Agency, Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District, Russian River County Sanitation District

Department or Agency Name(s): Sonoma County Water Agency

Staff Name and Phone Number: Joan Hultberg, 707-547-1902

Vote Requirement: Majority

Supervisorial District(s): Countywide

Title:

Resolutions to Apply for Future FEMA Disaster Assistance Grants

Recommended Action:

- A) Adopt a Resolution designating the Sonoma County Water Agency's General Manager, Assistant General Managers, and Director of Engineering, on behalf of the Sonoma County Water Agency, to file applications and execute agreements for federal and/or state disaster financial assistance, effective for all open and future disasters for up to three (3) years from the date of approval.
- B) Adopt a Resolution designating the Sonoma County Water Agency's General Manager, Assistant General Managers, and Director of Engineering, on behalf of the Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District, to file applications and execute agreements for federal and/or state disaster financial assistance, effective for all open and future disasters for up to three (3) years from the date of approval.
- C) Adopt a Resolution designating the Sonoma County Water Agency's General Manager, Assistant General Managers, and Director of Engineering, on behalf of the Russian River County Sanitation District, to file applications and execute agreements for federal and/or state disaster financial assistance, effective for all open and future disasters for up to three (3) years from the date of approval.

Executive Summary:

Since the 2017 wildfires, presidential disaster declarations in our state have resulted in over \$300 million in federal funds allocated to California's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. This statewide competitive grant program makes funds available for activities that will lessen damage to people, structures, and infrastructure in the event of a future disaster. Adopting resolutions designating authorized representatives to apply for and receive grant funding from FEMA and/or the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services will allow Sonoma County Water Agency, on behalf of itself and the sanitation districts it operates, to quickly respond to funding opportunities for all open and future disasters for a period of up to three (3) years following the date of approval. The language and form of the resolutions are provided by the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services.

Discussion:

Background

Sonoma County Water Agency (Sonoma Water) manages and maintains a water transmission system that

provides naturally filtered Russian River water to nine cities and special districts that in turn delivers drinking water to more than 600,000 residents in portions of Sonoma and Marin counties.

In 1995 Sonoma Water assumed responsibility from the County of Sonoma for managing the county sanitation zones and districts, which provide wastewater collection and treatment, and recycled water distribution and disposal services for more than 30,000 residences and businesses. Sonoma Water operates and manages four County Sanitation Districts under contracts with the Districts: Russian River County Sanitation District (Russian River District), Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District (Sonoma Valley District), Occidental County Sanitation District, and South Park County Sanitation District.

Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000

Natural disasters can result in enormous cost to the public through loss of life, human suffering, property damage and economic loss. Lack of preparedness can make recovery a very long and arduous process, which can last for many months or years and can depress a region for a time long after the physical signs of the disaster have disappeared. Recognizing this, the Federal Government passed the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000), which encourages and rewards pre-disaster planning at all levels of local, tribal and state government. DMA 2000 was signed into law (Public Law 106-390) by the President on October 10, 2000.

As an incentive for pre-disaster mitigation planning, the DMA 2000 has established a pre-disaster mitigation program, administered through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and incorporated new requirements for the national post-disaster Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. Collectively referred to as Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA), a larger amount of funds are available for communities that have developed a comprehensive mitigation plan prior to a disaster. States, territories, tribes, universities, and communities must have an approved mitigation plan in place before receiving HMA funds. Funding for the implementation of these plans reduces overall risks to the population and structures, while also reducing reliance on funding from actual disaster declarations. HMA grants are awarded on a competitive basis and without reference to state allocations, quotas, or other formula-based allocation of funds. An approved Local Hazard Mitigation Plan is a pre-requisite for applying for a HMA grant.

Hazard Mitigation Assistance Funding Requirements

Through its Hazard Mitigation Assistance programs, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) helps states, territories, federally-recognized tribes, local communities and certain private, non-profit organizations become more resilient to potential infrastructure damage and reduce future disaster costs. In the past 30 years, FEMA has invested more than \$1.3 billion to reduce disaster risk in California.

In order for a project to be eligible for Hazard Mitigation Assistance funds, the applicant must have a current local hazard mitigation plan approved by FEMA and adopted by its governing board. The Russian River District and Sonoma Valley District each have their own approved plans; the Occidental and South Park Sanitation Districts are included in Sonoma Water's local hazard mitigation plan, along with the sanitation zones.

Every application for Hazard Mitigation Assistance grant funds must be accompanied by a resolution from the applicant's governing board authorizing specific individuals to apply for the grant and take certain actions if the grant is awarded. The actions normally associated with these grants include applying for, obtaining, modifying and claiming reimbursements, and amending and closing out grant documentation.

The resolutions can be adopted as either a disaster-specific resolution or a “universal” resolution that is effective for all open and future disasters up to three years of the date of approval. The disaster-specific option limits the designated agents’ authority to a particular grant or project. Additional resolutions would be required for any subsequent grant or disaster approved for funding. Staff recommends adopting the “universal” version to enable staff to efficiently interact with FEMA in the wake of disasters such as our recent flood and fire events. Federally declared disasters, such as the state-wide floods and wildfires of 2017, 2019, and 2023 activate numerous potential funding programs that often have short windows to apply. If the universal option is adopted, staff will keep the Boards of Directors informed of any subsequent grant awards via staff update reports.

Prior Resolutions Adopted

The language and form of the resolutions are provided by the California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services. Your Boards previously approved the following “universal” versions of the resolutions:

- Sonoma County Water Agency: Resolution no. 20-0218: June 9, 2020
- Russian River County Sanitation District: Resolution no. 20-0220, June 9, 2020
- Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District: Resolution no. 20-0219, June 9, 2020

FEMA Grants awarded to date

Since 2010, in compliance with federal and state regulatory requirements, Sonoma Water has successfully managed over \$10.2 million in hazard mitigation funds for construction and planning projects, with an additional \$1.8 million in awards pending.

Project	Grant Award	Status
Santa Rosa Aqueduct - Rodgers Creek Fault Crossing	\$2,370,360	completed
Santa Rosa Aqueduct - Mark West Creek Fault Crossing	\$2,810,700	In progress
Isolation Valves Project	\$1,930,182	completed
Local Hazard Mitigation Plan 2018 Update	\$150,000	completed
Penngrove Lift Station - Flood Resiliency Project	\$350,266	In progress
Ely Booster Station Hazard Mitigation Project	\$2,306,867	In progress
Advanced RADAR Flood Warning System (Planning)	\$110,101	In progress
Local Hazard Mitigation Plan 2023 Update	\$150,000	In progress
Advanced RADAR Flood Warning System (Construction)	\$1,889,899	pending
Total	\$12,068,375	

Since 2013, Sonoma Valley District has received approximately \$345,000 in hazard mitigation funds for planning projects, with an additional \$2.5 million in awards for construction projects.

Project	Grant Award	Status
Local Hazard Mitigation Plan for SVCSD	\$25,000	Completed
Secondary Clarifier Seismic Retrofit (Planning)	\$195,959	Completed
Secondary Clarifier Seismic Retrofit (Construction)	\$2,553,597	In progress

Local Hazard Mitigation Plan 2020 Update	\$125,000	Completed
Total	\$2,899,556	

Since 2018, Russian River District has received \$2.2 million in hazard mitigation funds for construction, with an additional \$125,000 for planning projects.

Project	Grant Award	Status
Secondary Clarifier Seismic Retrofit (Construction)	\$2,238,402	In progress
RRCSD Pipeline Crossing Vulnerability Assessment	\$125,000	In progress
Total	\$2,363,402	

Next Steps:

If your Boards adopt these resolutions, Sonoma Water will be able to apply for Hazard Mitigation grant funds for eligible projects within the jurisdictions of Sonoma Water, Russian River District, and Sonoma Valley District.

Recommendations

Staff recommends that the Boards of Directors of the Sonoma County Water Agency, the Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District, and the Russian River County Sanitation District each adopt resolutions designating the Water Agency’s General Manager, Assistant General Managers, and Director of Engineering as authorized agents of the Boards to apply for, accept awards, and enter into agreements for Federal and/or State disaster funds.

Sonoma County Strategic Plan

N/A

Sonoma Water Strategic Plan Alignment:

Water Supply and Transmission System, Goal 1: Protect drinking water supply and promote water-use efficiency.

Waste Water Treatment and Water Reuse, Goal 2: Improve the financial health of wastewater treatment and water reuse systems.

Projects funded by mitigation grants allow Sonoma Water and the Districts to increase infrastructure resiliency and reliability before disaster strikes. By adopting these resolutions staff will be able to quickly and efficiently interact with FEMA and Cal OES in order to apply to numerous potential funding opportunities available under the Hazard Mitigation Assistance program.

Prior Board Actions:

6/9/2020: Resolutions to Apply for Future FEMA Disaster Assistance Grants A) Adopt a resolution authorizing application and acceptance of Hazard Mitigation Assistance grants for a period of three years (Russian River County Sanitation District); B) Adopt a resolution authorizing application and acceptance of Hazard Mitigation Assistance grants for a period of three years (Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District); C) Adopt a resolution authorizing application and acceptance of Hazard Mitigation Assistance grants for a period of three years (Sonoma County Water Agency)

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 22-23 Adopted	FY23-24 Projected	FY 24-25 Projected
Budgeted Expenses			
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures			
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
Total Sources			

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

There is no fiscal impact associated with adopting the resolutions. Staff will return to your Boards with future grant awards and resulting fiscal impacts.

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

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

None

Attachments:

Three resolutions

Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board:

N/A