



Legislation Text

File #: 2024-0785, **Version:** 1

To: Sonoma County Board of Supervisors
Department or Agency Name(s): Regional Parks
Staff Name and Phone Number: Robert Gonzalez, 707-565-2041
Vote Requirement: 4/5th
Supervisorial District(s): Fourth

Title:

Community Infrastructure Grant for The Friends of Lake Sonoma

Recommended Action:

- A) Approve \$100,000 grant award to The Friends of Lake Sonoma to provide funds from District Community Infrastructure Funds towards the re-opening of the Liberty Glen Campground, trail restorations, signage, visitor center displays and programming in the support of the annual Lake Sonoma Steelhead Festival.
- B) Make a finding the expenditures proposed in the Board item are in compliance with Government Code Section 26227, and these expenditures are “necessary to meet the social needs of the population of the County.”
- C) Delegate authority to the Regional Parks Director, or designee, to execute a grant agreement, in a form approved by County Counsel and in an amount not to exceed \$100,000.
- D) Adopt a Budget Resolution in the amount of \$100,000 from District Specific Community Infrastructure Funds (District 4) and adding appropriations to Regional Parks to be used for The Friends of Lake Sonoma agreement and their proposed scope of work.

(4/5th Vote)

Executive Summary:

District Specific Community Infrastructure Funds were established during FY2022/23 and FY2023/24 budget hearings to address the infrastructure needs within each districts’ community area.

Supervisor Gore is proposing to use a portion of these funds for a grant to The Friends of Lake Sonoma (a 501 (c)3) towards their efforts related to the re-opening of the Liberty Glen Campground and other facility improvements in support of the annual Lake Sonoma Steelhead Festival.

Discussion:

Over the past four years, the Lake Sonoma Recreational Area has faced numerous challenges related to maintenance and infrastructure. Federal budget cuts, combined with COVID regulations and extreme drought followed by excessive rainfall and record water levels have led to a myriad of issues requiring immediate attention to make the park fully operational.

The Friends of Lake Sonoma (FOLS) is a 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization founded more than 40 years ago to support U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) projects at Lake Sonoma Recreational Area. Historically, FOLS

has supported a variety of initiatives and programs, ranging from trail maintenance and equipment purchases to educational tours, construction of tour-related facilities and production of the annual Lake Sonoma Steelhead Festival, one of Sonoma County’s largest public events.

The rapidly changing environment over the last four years at Lake Sonoma Recreational Area has led FOLS to move towards resolving many of the issues USACE can no longer handle due to budget cuts and staffing cuts. This grant proposal will address immediate “can do” projects to address the needs of Lake Sonoma Recreational Area’s largest campground, Liberty Glen, which has been closed for three years due to electrical problems and lack of access to water. The grant proposal also seeks to rectify issues related to the sudden rise of the water level after an extended drought, that includes trail restoration and construction of bridges on trails that have been submerged. FOLS also seeks to replace/repair deteriorating signage at trailheads and on trails and has secured a matching donation of \$5,000 from an anonymous donor to achieve that end. The Milt Brandt Visitor Center at Lake Sonoma has a need to enhance existing displays and offer educational outreach programs. This will help accommodate the increased number of visitors now the center is open daily, thanks to a partnership with Sonoma Water, which provides weekday “Ambassador” staffing. A portion of the funds would also support the annual Lake Sonoma Steelhead Festival, which is the lake’s largest single annual event, providing free environmental and conservation outreach mainly to families with younger children. Finally, this grant allows for the development of a strategic plan for the Friends of Lake Sonoma with the goal of making the non-profit financially strong and independent.

The \$100,000 County Community Infrastructure Funds grant will be used toward the following expenses:

1.	\$45,000	Liberty Glen Campground preparation for dry camping. Purchase of a new gate, solar-powered lighting and wi-fi connections for camper safety. In addition, construction of a self-serve kiosk for campers and clean-up of a site to eventually accommodate the mobile home of a campground supervisor.
2.	\$15,000	High water trail restoration
3.	\$10,000	Trailhead and trail signage for more than 40 miles of trails.
4.	\$15,000	Milt Brandt Visitor Center enhancements for educational outreach to school children and to accommodate the increase in foot traffic now that the center is open daily. This would include improvements to the Friends of Lake Sonoma gift shop to help provide an additional revenue stream for the organization.
5.	\$10,000	Development of a strategic plan for the Friends of Lake Sonoma, using a professional consultant.
6.	\$ 5,000	Support of the Lake Sonoma Steelhead Festival, the lake’s largest annual public outreach event.
	\$100,000	Total

Funds will be dispersed pursuant to the enclosed grant agreement upon Board approval. Funds dispersal will require submission of documentation related to the use of funds to Regional Parks for the total amount of the grant.

The grant is authorized by Government Code section 26227 as a financial contribution towards the improvement of real property by another public agency for programs designed to meet the social needs, including health and welfare, of the population of the County.

Strategic Plan:

N/A

Racial Equity:

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

No

Prior Board Actions:

The District Specific Community Infrastructure Funds were established during the FY2022/23 and 2023/24 budget hearings.

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY24-25 Adopted	FY25-26 Projected	FY26-27 Projected
Budgeted Expenses			
Additional Appropriation Requested	100,000		
Total Expenditures	100,000		
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF	100,000		
State/Federal			
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
General Fund Contingencies			
Total Sources	100,000		

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

District Specific Community Infrastructure Funds are included in the FY 2425 budget. A budget resolution is attached to add \$100,000 in appropriations to Regionals Parks FY 2024/25 budget to fund this agreement.

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:

Budget Resolution
Grant Funding Agreement

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

None