



Legislation Text

File #: 2019-1216, **Version:** 1

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

Department or Agency Name(s): Sonoma County Regional Parks; Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District

Staff Name and Phone Number: Hattie Brown, 565-3220; Monica Delmartini, 565-7260

Vote Requirement: Majority

Supervisorial District(s): First

Title:

Sonoma Land Trust Grant Award

Recommended Action:

- A) Approve a resolution authorizing the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors and the Directors of Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District to accept grant awards from the Sonoma Land Trust to do work under CALFIRE's Fire Prevention Grant and authorizing the Directors to execute all documents which may be necessary to carry out and administer the grants.
- B) Adopt a resolution adjusting the Sonoma County Regional Parks Fiscal Year 2019/2020 Budget by \$99,904 and adjusting the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District Fiscal Year 2019/2020 Budget by \$52,500.

(First District)

Executive Summary:

Sonoma County Regional Parks (Regional Parks) and the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District (Ag + Open Space) are seeking funding to implement fuels reduction and increase landscape resiliency in the Sonoma Valley area. Grant funding from CALFIRE via Sonoma Land Trust to both Regional Parks (\$99,904) and the Ag + Open Space (\$105,400 - \$52,500 for fiscal 2019/2020 and \$52,500 for fiscal 2020/2021) would fund on-the-ground vegetation work and planning efforts to reduce hazardous fuels over a 2.5 year term. While both Regional Parks and Ag + Open Space implement fuels reduction work throughout Sonoma County, this grant application was limited to the Nuns fire area and surrounding landscape.

Discussion:

In the wake of the October 2017 fires, six different land-owning organizations in the Sonoma Valley area (Regional Parks, Ag + Open Space, California State Parks, Sonoma Land Trust, Sonoma Mountain Ranch Preservation Foundation, and Audubon Canyon Ranch) formed the Sonoma Valley Wildlands Collaborative (the Collaborative) to build landscape resiliency by coordinating land management across parcel boundaries. One of the outcomes of this collaboration was the successful application by Sonoma Land Trust to CALFIRE's Fire Prevention Grant Program for over \$1 million to implement fuels reduction, fire prevention and planning, and prescribed fire in the Sonoma Valley area on lands owned by the Collaborative entities. Goals of the project include:

1. Reducing wildfire risks to life and property within the wildland-urban interface along the HWY 12 corridor in the Sonoma Valley;
2. Increasing ecosystem resilience to wildfire, improving forest health, preserving ecosystem values and supporting landscape adaptation to climate change;
3. Building a replicable model for public-private collaboration that addresses fire and vegetation management on a landscape and fire-shed scale;
4. Promoting an informed and engaged public that recognizes the important and inevitable role of fire in our natural landscapes and understands the need for active vegetation management, including prescribed burning.

Regional Parks and Ag + Open Space are requesting the Board's approval of grants from Sonoma Land Trust as sub-awards resulting from the successful grant from CALFIRE. The sub-award amounts to Regional Parks and Ag + Open Space are \$99,904 and \$105,400 (\$52,500 for fiscal 2019/2020 and \$52,500 for fiscal 2020/2021), respectively, of a total \$1,055,575 grant from CALFIRE.

The Wildlands Collaborative has met over several years and identified projects to reduce the risk of future wildfire. The Collaborative is already working closely with CALFIRE's Sonoma Lake Napa Unit (LNU) to develop a cooperative multi-phase strategy that supports key elements of both the Strategic Fire Plan for California (2016) and the LNU's Strategic Fire Management Plan (2017). In 2019, this collaboration resulted in the first ever prescribed fire in the history of Sonoma County Regional Parks and basic wildland firefighter training for Regional Parks staff.

Based on community feedback at various stakeholder meetings, this type of landscape-level coordination and treatment is exactly the type of work that Sonoma County residents support.

Should these sub-awards be accepted, vegetation treatments such as shaded fuel breaks are anticipated to begin as early as October 2019 and continue into 2022 on Regional Parks and Ag + Open Space properties. Grant-funded activities will not significantly interrupt ongoing operations of Sonoma Valley Regional Park, North Sonoma Mountain Regional Park, Hood Mountain Regional Park, or Calabazas Creek Open Space Preserve. Regional Parks and Ag + Open Space will continue to manage these County park and open space facilities. Ag + Open Space will transfer fee title ownership of Calabazas Creek Open Space Preserve to Regional Parks in 2020.

Regional Parks owns and operates parklands throughout Sonoma County and conducts ongoing vegetation management as well as episodic or one-time vegetation treatments as needed at all park properties. Likewise, Ag + Open Space owns and protects land throughout Sonoma County and conducts both ongoing and episodic vegetation treatments as needed at all Ag + Open Space properties. This grant award focuses on parks and open space preserves within Supervisorial District 1 and properties impacted or nearly impacted by the Nuns fire; however, similar activities will occur throughout Sonoma County and the Regional Park system. For example, in partnership with CALFIRE and others, recent fuels reduction work occurred at Shiloh Ranch Regional Park near the town of Windsor and the Coastal Prairie Trail near Bodega Bay, and Ag + Open Space is working with CALFIRE to plan and implement fuel management projects at Saddle Mountain Open Space Preserve.

Prior Board Actions:

December 11, 2018 - The Board of Supervisors approved the Recovery and Resiliency Framework (Agenda Item #61) which addresses natural resources as one of five key strategic areas. Projects on Regional Parks' properties resulting from this grant directly address priority actions within this key strategic area.

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 19-20 Adopted	FY20-21 Projected	FY 21-22 Projected
Budgeted Expenses	AOS: 52,500 Parks: 99,904	AOS: 52,500	
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures			
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other	AOS: 52,500 Parks: 99,904	AOS: 52,500	
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
Total Sources			

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

Revenues and expenses will be equally increased as a result of this grant.

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:

Resolution #1 authorizing Directors to execute and administer grants.
Resolution #2 authorizing budgetary adjustments.

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

None.