



Legislation Text

File #: 2019-1727, **Version:** 1

To: Board of Directors, Sonoma County Water Agency

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

Staff Name and Phone Number: Dale Roberts / 547-1979 and Brad Sherwood / 547-1927

Vote Requirement: Majority

Supervisory District(s): Countywide

Title:

Sponsorship for Fellow at National Council for Science and Environment Applied Solutions Science Corps

Recommended Action:

In an ongoing effort to fulfill Sonoma Water's legislative platform to support programs aimed at putting national climate change policies into practice at the local level:

Authorize Sonoma County Water Agency's General Manager to execute an agreement with the National Council for Science and Environment to sponsor a student fellow through June 30, 2020, in the amount of \$65,760.

Executive Summary:

The Sonoma County Water Agency (Sonoma Water) helped create the non-profit organization Applied Solutions in 2008. Applied Solutions works with local governments to help build clean economies by undertaking clean energy, building, transportation, and water projects that promote local job creation, energy savings, economic development and greater self-reliance strengthened by the integration of cleaner energy sources, efficiency measures, and climate adaptation measures. National Council for Science and Environment (NCSE) is taking over the operation of Applied Solutions. Sonoma Water desires to support a fellow to help NCSE's academic experts reach the broad membership of local governments within Applied Solutions and to allow the Applied Solutions membership to influence NCSE's academic research direction. Sonoma Water staff recommend the Board authorize the General Manager to execute an agreement with the National Council for Science and Environment to sponsor a student fellow from August 2019 through June 30, 2020. NCSE will fund the fellow and with Board approval, Sonoma Water will subsidize the full cost in a lump sum.

Discussion:

HISTORY OF ITEM/BACKGROUND

National Council for Science and Environment (NCSE) is an internationally recognized non-profit organization based in Washington, D.C., which works with scientists, educators, policymakers, business leaders, and officials at all levels of government to inform environmental policy and decision-making with the use of science.

NCSE is experienced in collaborating between academic institutions and local governments in actions that can be used to further the goals of Sonoma Water.

Sonoma Water's Energy Policy, adopted by Sonoma Water's Board of Directors on March 22, 2011, directs Sonoma Water to "continue to seek and develop more reliable sources of electricity for the region, including

participating in local energy projects and programs that promote self-sufficiency and make North Bay residents less dependent on outside energy sources." Sonoma Water staff recommend helping sponsor a fellow employed by NCSE during the academic year 2019/2020 to perform work related to water, energy, and climate resiliency projects to further Sonoma Water's Energy Policy objectives.

Sonoma Water helped create the non-profit organization Applied Solutions in 2008. Applied Solutions works with local governments to help build a clean economy by undertaking clean energy and water projects that promote local job creation, energy savings, economic development and greater self-reliance strengthened by the integration of cleaner energy sources, efficiency measures, and climate adaptation measures. NCSE is taking over the operation of Applied Solutions. Sonoma Water desires to support a fellow to help transition Applied Solutions to NCSE, to help NCSE's academic experts reach the broad membership of local governments within Applied Solutions, and to allow the Applied Solutions membership to influence NCSE's academic research direction.

NCSE is collaborating with Northeastern University in Boston, Massachusetts to employ an undergraduate student fellow for the 2019/2020 academic year. NCSE advertised for an intern, screened and interviewed candidates, and selected the candidate that best met their qualifications. The fellow will work to engage the NCSE Applied Solutions network of local governments, along with state and federal partners, to help design a new program to empower undergraduates, graduate students, junior, and mid-career scientists in fields that span the social and natural sciences to build competencies in science policy through immersive experiences in local, state government, and federal government. This NCSE Applied Solutions Science Corps program will also enable decision-makers to benefit from enhanced staff capacity on environmental and technical issues, as well as ready access to research and other networks of science experts.

SERVICES TO BE PERFORMED

Under the proposed agreement, NCSE will employ a student fellow to engage the NCSE Applied Solutions network of local governments, along with state and federal partners, to help design a new NCSE Applied Solutions Science Corps program. This program would be designed to empower undergraduates, graduate students, junior, and mid-career scientists in fields that span the social and natural sciences to build competencies in science policy through immersive experiences in local, state government, and federal government. This NCSE Applied Solutions Science Corps program would also enable decision-makers to benefit from enhanced staff capacity on environmental and technical issues, as well as ready access to research and other networks of science experts. The NCSE Applied Solutions Fellow would:

1. Work closely with and report to NCSE's Science Policy Director.
2. Serve as a member of the NCSE team and focus on supporting the strategic development of NCSE's science policy portfolio.
3. Conduct landscape analysis of environmental issue areas of priority to local governments in NCSE Applied Solutions network, including water resources, energy resources, and climate adaptation efforts.
4. Update contacts and renew relationships with local governments in NCSE Applied Solutions network.
5. Liaise with university program leads to assess entry points for engagement between academic institutions and decision-makers.
6. Support development of training program and associated materials for orienting incoming NCSE Science Corps interns and providing ongoing professional development.
7. Submit summary report of monthly activities to advance the NCSE Applied Solutions program to local

governments.

Prior Board Actions:

None

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 19-20 Adopted	FY20-21 Projected	FY 21-22 Projected
Budgeted Expenses	\$65,760		
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures	\$65,760		
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF	\$65,760		
State/Federal			
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
Total Sources	\$65,760		

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

Budgeted amount of \$65,760 is available from FY 2019/2020 appropriations for the Sonoma Water General Fund. No additional appropriation is required.

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

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

N/A

Attachments:

Attachment 1: Agreement with NCSE.

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

None