



## Legislation Text

---

**File #:** 2020-0492, **Version:** 1

---

**To:** Board of Directors of the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District  
**Department or Agency Name(s):** Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District  
**Staff Name and Phone Number:** Leslie Lew, 565-7367  
**Vote Requirement:** Majority  
**Supervisory District(s):** First District

**Title:**

Calabazas Creek Open Space Preserve Services Agreement for Prescription Grazing

**Recommended Action:**

Authorize the General Manager of the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District to execute an agreement for prescribed grazing services for fuel reduction and weed management for an amount not-to-exceed \$218,866, effective for three years ending on December 31, 2022.  
(First District)

**Executive Summary:**

The Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District currently owns the 1,290-acre Calabazas Creek Open Space Preserve near Glen Ellen. The Preserve's grassland habitats can become infested with yellow star thistle. In the past, Ag + Open Space has used hand-pulling and other mechanical means along with herbicide to manage yellow star thistle. In 2019, Ag + Open Space initiated a one-year prescribed grazing program targeting yellow star thistle, reducing the need to use herbicide on the Preserve. In addition to reducing the extent of yellow star thistle, the program resulted in a reduction in fire fuel loads.

Contractor services are required to complete prescribed grazing activities. A service provider was selected pursuant to a Request for Proposals process.

**Discussion:**

The Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District (Ag + Open Space) is committed to managing nonnative invasive weeds and implementing fire fuel reduction measures on Ag + Open Space-owned properties in an efficient and timely manner. In 2019, Ag+Open Space introduced prescribed grazing to the Calabazas Creek Open Space Preserve (Preserve), successfully reducing fuel heights and yellow star thistle abundance. The Preserve's rugged, steep, and remote character presents a challenge to using other methods of grass fuel reduction.

Ag + Open Space proposes a three-year service agreement (on file with the Clerk of the Board) with Aaron Gilliam dba SweetGrass Grazing for prescribed grazing services totaling \$218,866, effective for three years ending on December 31, 2022.

SweetGrass Grazing was selected based on their ability to provide prescribed grazing services targeting yellow

star thistle reduction and they proposed to do the work cost-effectively.

### **Competitive Selection Process**

Ag + Open Space conducted a Request for Proposal (RFP) process to identify and screen qualified contractors for prescribed grazing services. The RFP was sent to approximately 389 firms and advertised on the Ag + Open Space website and the County Purchasing website. A total of 2 entities submitted proposals for this RFP. Using a set of selection criteria, an evaluation committee comprised of internal staff independently reviewed both of the proposals, scored each according to the pre-established criteria, and selected the vendor most capable of providing the identified services. SweetGrass Grazing submitted a responsive proposal that clearly addressed the needs of the Ag + Open Space and thoughtfully responded to the elements described in the RFP. SweetGrass Grazing also proposed to do the work at a lower cost than the other proposer.

### **Local Preference, Local Experience**

The selected firm is located in Sonoma County, and has significant experience working in the Sonoma County community.

### **Prior Board Actions:**

### **FISCAL SUMMARY**

<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>FY 19-20 Adopted</b>	<b>FY20-21 Projected</b>	<b>FY 21-22 Projected</b>
Budgeted Expenses	\$80,000	\$67,912	\$70,954
Additional Appropriation Requested			
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$80,000</b>	<b>\$67,912</b>	<b>\$70,954</b>
<b>Funding Sources</b>			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other	\$80,000	\$67,912	\$70,954
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
<b>Total Sources</b>	<b>\$80,000</b>	<b>\$67,912</b>	<b>\$70,954</b>

### **Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:**

Adequate appropriations are existing in the FY 19-20 budget and will be incorporated into the projected year's budgets.

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


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

**Attachments:**

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

1. Professional Service Agreement with Aaron Gilliam dba SweetGrass Grazing