



Legislation Text

File #: 2021-0586, **Version:** 1

To: Board of Directors, Sonoma County Water Agency
Department or Agency Name(s): Sonoma County Water Agency
Staff Name and Phone Number: Ann DuBay 521-1164
Vote Requirement: Majority
Supervisory District(s): Countywide

Title:

Russian River Watershed Program and Sonoma County Watersheds Program

Recommended Action:

- A) Authorize Sonoma County Water Agency's General Manager to execute the Third Amended Agreement for Funding of Russian River Watershed Program with Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District to continue to provide groundwater sustainability planning, reporting, and watershed health education and outreach. The third amended agreement increases the amount by \$100,000, and extends the agreement term two years for a new not-to-exceed agreement total of \$287,000 and end date of August 31, 2023.
- B) Authorize Sonoma County Water Agency's General Manager to execute the First Amended Agreement for Funding of Sonoma County Watersheds Program with Sonoma Resource Conservation District to continue to conduct landowner outreach activities and provide funding development for watershed health and habitat restoration. The first amended agreement increases the amount by \$120,000, and extends the agreement term two years for a new not-to-exceed agreement total of \$240,000 and end date of August 31, 2023.

Executive Summary:

This item requests authority for Sonoma County Water Agency's (Sonoma Water) General Manager to execute a third amended agreement with Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District (Gold Ridge RCD) to add two years and \$100,000 for groundwater sustainability planning, reporting and education, and collaboration within the community to restore resources and improve water quality and habitat. Gold Ridge RCD will continue to conduct landowner outreach activities, water quality testing in tributary streams, and develop grants that could fund salmonid restoration projects to help improve Russian River watershed conditions.

This item also requests authority for Sonoma Water's General Manager to execute a first amended agreement with Sonoma Resource Conservation District (Sonoma RCD) to add two years and \$120,000 to conduct landowner outreach activities and assistance; provide educational materials to sub-watershed groups and residents in the Russian River, Petaluma, and Sonoma Valley watersheds; and provide funding development for watershed health and habitat restoration.

Discussion:

BACKGROUND

Sonoma Water has a long history of partnerships with local Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs), including

Gold Ridge RCD and Sonoma RCD, to provide technical and landowner assistance, public education and information, watershed stewardship, watershed monitoring, interagency coordination, resource enhancement, and planning assistance to local groups to help improve land management and restore fish habitat. The purpose of these funding agreements is to expand knowledge on the critical connection between landowner activities and the impacts on local creeks, streams, and other water bodies.

The RCDs are uniquely qualified to work directly with landowners with nonregulatory, cooperative agreements and are a trusted source of accurate and useful information.

Partnership between Sonoma Water and Gold Ridge RCD

Gold Ridge RCD's service area consists of 134,000 acres of diverse resources including streams, coastal areas, rangeland, woodland life and fisheries habitat, vineyards, orchards, and cropland, as well as rural and urban areas located in the Russian River and Bodega Bay watersheds.

Since 2001, Gold Ridge RCD has received funding from Sonoma Water to create a long-term system of organization, training, communication, and improvements in land management to improve the health of the watershed and enhance and restore habitat for threatened fish species.

Sonoma Water and Gold Ridge RCD worked cooperatively on past fishery resource-related projects including instream habitat improvement projects on Dutch Bill, Green Valley, Purrington, Atascadero, Redwood, and Freezeout creeks; coordinating water quality sampling on Dutch Bill Creek; and riparian planting and erosion control work on Purrington, Green Valley, and Dutch Bill creeks.

It is in the interest of Sonoma Water to work with and provide partial funding for Gold Ridge RCD to carry out components of Gold Ridge RCD's annual work-plan, which includes salmonid restoration, improvements to tributary streams, and education for landowners on the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's Coho, Captive Broodstock Program. It is also in the interest of Gold Ridge RCD to work with Sonoma Water to carry out Russian River Watershed restoration activities.

Sonoma Water and Gold Ridge RCD entered into an agreement for funding of the Russian River Watershed Program on October 25, 2017, in the amount of \$60,000 and term end date of August 31, 2019.

The first amended agreement, dated September 11, 2018, expanded the scope to include groundwater sustainability planning and reporting, and increased the amount by \$27,000 to fund the additional work for a new agreement total of \$87,000. There was no change to the term end date.

The second amended agreement, dated September 29, 2019, increased the amount by \$100,000, expanded the scope of work to include additional watersheds, and added two years for a new Agreement total of \$187,000 and end date of August 31, 2021.

Sonoma Water and Gold Ridge RCD wish to continue the funding and work under this agreement.

Partnership between Sonoma Water and Sonoma RCD

Since 1946, the Sonoma RCD has facilitated natural resource conservation through community involvement, education, technical expertise and scientific research. The district covers 919,000 acres, or more than 85% of

Sonoma County, and includes the Russian River, Petaluma River, Sonoma Creek, Stemple Creek, and Gualala River Watersheds.

Sonoma RCD's mission include water quality protection, restoration of fish and wildlife habitat, conservation of water resources, and drought and changing climate strategies. As a legal subdivision of the State of California, Sonoma RCD is organized to support natural resource management solutions through partnerships with individuals, organizations and agencies.

In 2013, Southern Sonoma RCD and Sotoyome RCD merged to form Sonoma RCD. Sonoma Water has a long history of partnership with these entities to receive funding from Sonoma Water to advance the Sonoma County Watersheds Program.

It is in the interest of Sonoma Water to work with and provide funding for Sonoma RCD to improve Sonoma Water's understanding of watershed conditions; create opportunities to educate agricultural and urban communities about key issues, including groundwater, water conservation, storm water and rainwater catchment, and development of habitat enhancement; and to enhance Sonoma Water's goals of protecting water quality, improving watershed health, and building community partnerships. It is also in the interest of Sonoma RCD to work with Sonoma Water to carry out restoration activities.

Sonoma Water and Sonoma RCD entered into an agreement for funding of the Sonoma County Watershed Program on September 29, 2019, in the amount of \$120,000 and term end date of August 31, 2021.

Sonoma Water and Sonoma RCD wish to continue the funding and work under this agreement.

SERVICES TO BE PERFORMED

Amended Agreement between Sonoma Water and Gold Ridge RCD

Under the proposed amended agreement, Gold Ridge RCD will continue to conduct landowner outreach activities, water quality testing in tributary streams, and develop grants that could fund salmonid restoration projects to help improve Russian River Watershed conditions. In addition, recent changes to regional groundwater management calls for closer coordination with landowners living within the Santa Rosa Plain Groundwater Basin. Gold Ridge RCD will serve as a liaison to those communities and contribute to the overall development of a Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the Santa Rosa Plain Groundwater Basin.

The additional cost of services will not exceed \$50,000 in fiscal year 2021/2022 and \$50,000 in fiscal year 2022/2023. The new total agreement amount is \$287,000. The new end date is August 31, 2023.

Amended Agreement between Sonoma Water and Sonoma RCD

Under the proposed amended agreement, Sonoma RCD will continue to conduct landowner outreach activities and assistance, provide educational materials to sub-watershed groups and residents in the Russian River, Petaluma, and Sonoma Valley watersheds, and provide funding development for watershed health and habitat restoration.

The additional cost of services will not exceed \$60,000 in fiscal year 2021/2022 and \$60,000 in fiscal year 2022/2023. The new total agreement amount is \$240,000. The new term end date is August 31, 2023.

Prior Board Actions:

09/17/2019: Approved agreement between Sonoma Water and Sonoma RCD for funding of Program. Cost \$120,000; term end August 31, 2021.

09/17/2019: Approved second amended agreement between Sonoma Water and Gold Ridge RCD for funding of Program. New cost \$187,000; new term end August 31, 2021.

09/11/2018: Approved first amended agreement between Sonoma Water and Gold Ridge RCD for funding of Program. New cost \$87,000; no change to term end date.

09/19/2017: Approved agreement between Sonoma Water and Gold Ridge RCD for funding of Program. Cost \$60,000; term end August 31, 2019.

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 21-22 Adopted	FY22-23 Projected	FY 23-24 Projected
Budgeted Expenses	\$110,000	\$110,000	
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures	\$110,000	\$110,000	
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other	\$110,000	\$110,000	
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
Total Sources	\$110,000	\$110,000	

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

Budgeted amount of \$110,000 is available from FY 2021/2022 appropriations for the Russian River Projects fund. FY 2022/2023 appropriations will be budgeted in that fiscal year.

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:

None

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

None