



Legislation Text

File #: 2022-1089, **Version:** 1

To: Board of Directors, Sonoma County Water Agency
Department or Agency Name(s): Sonoma County Water Agency
Staff Name and Phone Number: Gregg Horton, 707-547-1907
Vote Requirement: 4/5th
Supervisory District(s): Countywide

Title:

Coho Broodstock Monitoring in Russian River Watershed

Recommended Action:

- A) Authorize Sonoma County Water Agency's (Sonoma Water) General Manager to execute an agreement with the Regents of the University of California, in a form approved by County Counsel, to receive up to \$307,597 to conduct salmonid population monitoring in the Russian River watershed through March 31, 2024.
- B) Authorize Sonoma Water's General Manager to amend the agreement to extend the term, make modifications to the scope of work, accept additional funds, or terminate the agreement with approval of County Counsel.
- C) Authorize Sonoma Water's General Manager to execute an Memorandum of Understanding with the Regents of the University of California, in a form approved by County Counsel, for use of office space at Sonoma Water's Administration building at no cost; term ends March 31, 2024.
- D) Authorize Sonoma Water's General Manager to amend the Memorandum of Understanding to extend the term, make modifications to the scope of work, accept additional funds, or terminate the agreement with approval of County Counsel.
- E) Adopt a Resolution authorizing adjustments to the Board Adopted Budget for FY 2022/2023 for the Sonoma Water Warm Springs Dam fund in the amount of \$123,039. (4/5th Vote Required)

(4/5th Vote Required)

Executive Summary:

The Regents of the University of California (Regents), through a direct contract with Sonoma Water, will provide up to \$307,597 to continue a fish monitoring program aimed at aiding the recovery of endangered Coho Salmon in the Russian River watershed. The data collected through this monitoring will facilitate evaluation of the Russian River Coho Salmon Captive Broodstock Program as outlined in NMFS' 2008 Russian River Biological Opinion (RRBiOp). The RRBiOp compels the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to conduct this monitoring on four sub-watersheds of the Russian River: Willow, Dutch Bill, Green Valley, and Mill, hereafter referred to as Life Cycle Monitoring (LCM) watersheds. The USACE has been meeting this obligation through a direct contract with Regents that provides funds to California Sea Grant (CSG) to conduct this monitoring. However, in 2022 CSG learned that existing administrative and other resources at CSG to continue field data collection tasks related to the RRBiOp will no longer be available. Because of this, aspects associated with field data collection will be transferred to Sonoma Water which will necessitate receipt of funds from Regents (ultimately USACE) to continue the work. The work will be carried out in close coordination with other

fish monitoring efforts in the watershed including Sonoma Water's existing RRBiOp monitoring program and implementation of the California Coastal Monitoring Program. To support and facilitate this transfer of work, Sonoma Water will provide office space for up to three CSG employees at no charge through March 31, 2024.

Discussion:

HISTORY OF ITEM/BACKGROUND

Sonoma Water has been collecting data on fish populations in the Russian River basin since 1999, and has a long history of developing, funding, and implementing fisheries habitat enhancement and fish population monitoring programs in the Russian River watershed.

Central California Coast Coho Salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*), California Coastal Chinook Salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*), and Central California Coast steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) are all listed as either threatened or endangered under Federal and/or State Endangered Species Acts. In particular, Coho Salmon populations in the Russian River are at extreme risk of extinction. In the early 2000's the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) recognized that Russian River Coho were about to disappear, so they captured some of the last remaining juvenile Coho in the watershed and placed them into captivity at the Don Clausen Fish Hatchery at Warm Springs Dam. This initial effort has since grown into what is now known as the Russian River Coho Salmon Captive Broodstock Program, funded and staffed by USACE. Since its inception, Sonoma Water has served as one of several partners providing technical advice on strategies for hatchery releases and follow-up monitoring. The RRBiOp outlines guidance for evaluating the efficacy of the program.

State and federal population recovery plans call for long-term population assessment and monitoring to address viable salmonid population indicators of abundance, productivity, spatial structure, and diversity at broader scales than those covered by the RRBiOp. A key tool to help make these evaluations is the CDFW California Salmonid Population Monitoring Plan (CMP). Sonoma Water has been implementing CMP monitoring in the Russian River watershed since 2013. This has allowed and will continue to allow the effects of mitigation measures such as those outlined in the RRBiOp to be decoupled from meaningful trends in population trajectories that are influenced by processes occurring at broader, evolutionarily significant regional scales. The monitoring outlined here will include conducting spawning ground surveys, snorkel surveys, and life cycle monitoring to provide estimates of adult and smolt abundance, redd abundance, and juvenile occupancy rates for Coho Salmon.

The purpose of the agreement between Regents and Sonoma Water is to continue building on existing data sets by providing salmonid population monitoring data relevant to evaluating the Russian River Coho Salmon Captive Broodstock Program through March 2024.

SERVICES TO BE PERFORMED

The following tasks will be performed by Sonoma Water:

- 1. Coordinate and manage field data collection, and report data collected in the field.** This includes overall project coordination, obtaining landowner access, oversight and scheduling of field activities, maintaining field data collection applications, implementing data QA/QC procedures, managing spatial and tabular databases, providing data accessibility, and coordination with existing monitoring efforts in the watershed.
- 2. Conduct Field Data Collection.** This includes the following monitoring for Coho Salmon in the four LCM watersheds on an annual basis. Conducting spawning ground surveys for estimating adult redd

abundance, conducting snorkel surveys to estimate the spatial distribution of juveniles, operation of passive integrated transponder (PIT) antennas to estimate adult abundance, operating downstream migrant traps in conjunction with PIT antennas to estimate smolt abundance. This task will consist of annual adult spawner surveys and juvenile snorkel surveys to generate annual estimates of Coho Salmon and steelhead redds in the Coho Salmon sample stratum and to evaluate the spatial structure of juvenile Coho Salmon in the Coho Salmon stratum of the Russian River watershed. Project personnel will survey a spatially balanced random sample of Coho Salmon reaches drawn from the current Russian River sample frame each year (pending landowner access approval).

After the agreement ends in 2024, Sonoma Water anticipates that the USACE will contract directly with Sonoma Water to continue to meet its obligations under the Russian River Biological Opinion. At that time, staff will return to the Board to request authority to accept funds and continue this work.

Memorandum Of Understanding For Use Of Office Space

As previously mentioned, the Russian River Biological Opinion compels the US Army Corps of Engineers to conduct life cycle monitoring on four sub-watersheds of the Russian River, and USACE has been meeting this obligation through a direct contract with California Sea Grant. However, in 2022 CSG learned that existing administrative and other resources at CSG to continue field data collection tasks related to the RRBiOp are being discontinued. Because of this, aspects associated with field data collection will be transferred to Sonoma Water and will be funded by UC Regents through the agreement described above.

To support and facilitate this transfer of work, Sonoma Water will provide office space for up to three CSG employees at Sonoma Water's Administration Building at 404 Aviation Boulevard, Santa Rosa, California. The office space will include two cubicles, furniture as available from existing stock, computer access/network service, telephone, security card access to building, and use of work space as determined by Sonoma Water. CSG personnel agree to adhere to Sonoma Water policies and procedures with respect to building access and use of IT infrastructure. Use of such space will be at no charge to CSG through March 31, 2024.

Strategic Plan:

N/A

Sonoma Water Strategic Plan Alignment:

Climate Change, Goal 1: Continuing improving our ability to respond and adapt to climate

Climate change, especially the effects of extended droughts, greatly impact fish populations in the Russian River basin. By collecting and quantifying related data and contributing it to a larger data collection program, scientists and biologists can find ways to support threatened and endangered fish species in our watershed and beyond.

Prior Board Actions:

05/19/2015: Resolution 15-0210 authorizing the General Manager execute a grant agreement with California Department of Fisheries and Wildlife for \$1,790,861 in support of the California Coastal Monitoring Program in the Russian River Watershed.

05/14/2013: Resolution 13-0196 authorizing the General Manager execute a grant agreement with California Department of Fisheries and Wildlife for \$826,277 in support of the California Coastal Monitoring Program in the Russian River Watershed.

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 22-23 Adopted	FY23-24 Projected	FY 24-25 Projected
Budgeted Expenses	\$79,164	\$303,305	
Additional Appropriation Requested	\$123,039		
Total Expenditures	\$202,203	\$303,305	
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal	\$123,039	\$184,558	
Fees/Other	\$79,164	\$118,747	
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
Total Sources	\$202,203	\$303,305	

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

Total costs to conduct salmonid population monitoring in the Russian River watershed through March 31, 2024 are estimated to be \$505,508, with \$307,597 in offsetting funds from the Regents of the University of California and \$197,911 in Sonoma Water cost share.

Budgeted amount of \$79,164 that is Sonoma Water's cost share is available from FY 2022/2023 appropriations for the Warms Spring Dam Fund which is funded by property tax revenue. With Board approval, additional appropriations in the amount of \$123,039 are required to process this expense. A budgetary resolution has been submitted with this item. Offsetting revenue in the amount of \$123,039 will come from the Regents of the University of California.

FY2023/2024 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:

Attachment 1: Budget Resolution R1

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

None