



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

R-24-03
Meeting 24-01
January 10, 2024

AGENDA ITEM 4

AGENDA ITEM

Award of Contract to Buena Vista Services, LLC., for the La Honda Forest Health Project

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATIONS *den*

1. Authorize the General Manager to enter into a contract with Buena Vista Services, LLC., of Alameda, California for \$80,000.
2. Authorize a 15% contingency of \$12,000 to be expended only if necessary to cover unanticipated conditions or needs, for a total not-to-exceed contract amount of \$92,000.

SUMMARY

At the July 26, 2023 Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (Midpen, District) Board of Directors (Board) Study Session, staff presented the Project Description for the La Honda Forest Health Project and outlined the next steps for project implementation, including soliciting the services of a Registered Professional Forester (RPF) to prepare the requisite Timber Harvest Plan (THP) for project areas where forest health treatments may generate merchantable timber ([R-23-88](#)). The General Manager recommends entering into a contract with Buena Vista Services, LLC., to prepare the THP and support stakeholder and public outreach for the project for a base contract amount of \$80,000 and authorizing a 15% contingency of \$12,000 for a total not-to-exceed contract amount of \$92,000. There are sufficient funds in the adopted Fiscal Year 2023-24 (FY24) budget to cover contract expenditures through the end of the fiscal year. Funding for future years will be requested as part of the annual Budget and Action Plan process.

BACKGROUND

The La Honda Forest Health Assessment and Management Plan ([R-21-103](#)) identifies several impairments impeding the health and resilience of the La Honda Forest. These impairments include overly dense redwood regrowth stands exhibiting high fuel loads and stunted growth, Douglas-fir and brush encroachment in hardwood stands, accumulated ladder fuels, Sudden Oak Death, as well as sedimentation and watercourse diversions from legacy industrial logging. By implementing strategic forest health treatments and watershed improvements, the La Honda Forest Health Project aims to restore and promote healthy, resilient, mature, and old-growth forests; improve watershed health and function; enhance wildlife habitat and carbon storage; and increase the forest's resilience to fire, disease, and climate change.

This project leverages two permitting mechanisms. For project areas where it is ecologically warranted and logistically feasible to implement forest health treatments that may generate merchantable timber, the District will utilize a THP, which is required for the sale of timber in California and offers the most streamlined, efficient, and cost-effective means of meeting the project goals, while simultaneously upholding rigorous environmental, public, and agency review standards. Per the District’s Forest Management Policies, forest treatments will be implemented exclusively to improve the health and resilience of the forest – irrespective of economic considerations. Furthermore, all revenue generated from timber sales conducted in conjunction with restoration activities will be reinvested into ongoing forest management efforts. The THP process typically spans two years from plan development, public review, and California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) review and approval. Once approved, THPs are valid for three years, with the option to renew once for an additional two-year period. For all other project areas, project implementation will occur under the District’s Wildland Fire Resiliency Program (WFRP).

DISCUSSION

A Request for Proposals and Qualifications (RFPQ) was issued on October 2, 2023 on the District’s website, BidSync/Periscope, and directly emailed to two forest management professionals. Staff received one proposal by the October 30, 2023 deadline.

Based on a thorough evaluation, Buena Vista Services, LLC., was deemed highly qualified, given the project team’s extensive field knowledge, prior experience with similar forest health projects completed for public agencies in San Mateo County, and a well-designed and justified methodology. Buena Vista Services, LLC., demonstrated a deep knowledge of the project’s background, setting, deliverables, and goals, and submitted a high-quality proposal to perform the scope of work at a fair and reasonable price. For these reasons, the General Manager recommends entering into an agreement with Buena Vista Services, LLC., to prepare the THP and support the District in conducting stakeholder and public outreach for this project.

FISCAL IMPACT

The FY24 adopted budget includes \$279,082 for the Restoration Forestry Demonstration Project MAA05-010. There are sufficient funds in the project budget to cover the recommended action and expenditures. Funding for future years budgets will be requested as part of the annual Budget and Action Plan process.

Restoration Forestry Demonstration Project MAA05-010	Prior Year Actuals	FY24 Adopted	FY25 Projected	FY26 Projected	Estimated Future Years	TOTAL
Total Budget (fund 30):	\$85,751	\$279,082	\$40,000	\$540,000	\$500,000	\$1,444,833
Spent-to-Date (as of 11/14/23):	(\$85,751)	(\$7,755)	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$93,506)
Encumbrances:	\$0	(\$41,260)	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$41,260)
Buena Vista Services, LLC Contract:	\$0	(\$44,000)	(\$32,000)	(\$4,000)	\$0	(\$80,000)
15% Contingency:	\$0	(\$6,600)	(\$4,800)	(\$600)	\$0	(\$12,000)
Budget Remaining (Proposed):	\$0	\$179,467	\$3,200	\$535,400	\$500,000	\$1,218,067

The following table outlines the Measure AA Portfolio 05 La Honda Creek—Upper Area Recreation, Habitat Restoration and Conservation Grazing Projects allocation, costs-to-date, projected future project expenditures and projected portfolio balance remaining.

MAA05 La Honda Creek—Upper Area Recreation, Habitat Restoration and Conservation Grazing Projects Portfolio Allocation:	\$11,733,000
Life-to-Date Spent (as of 11/14/23):	(\$3,706,408)
Encumbrances:	(\$408,670)
Remaining FY24 Project Budgets:	(\$1,302,208)
Future MAA05 project costs (projected through FY27):	(\$5,473,559)
Total Portfolio Expenditures:	(\$10,890,844)
Portfolio Balance Remaining (Proposed):	\$842,156

The following table outlines the Measure AA Portfolio 05 allocation, projected life of project expenditures and projected portfolio balance remaining.

MAA05 La Honda Creek—Upper Area Recreation, Habitat Restoration and Conservation Grazing Projects Portfolio Allocation:	\$11,733,000
Projected Project Expenditures (life of project):	
05-001 La Honda Creek Land Conservation Opportunities	(\$1,756,093)
05-002 Upper La Honda Creek Grazing Infrastructure	(\$297,432)
05-005 La Honda Creek Red Barn Parking Area and Easy Access Trail	(\$327,513)
05-007 La Honda Creek Phase II Trail Connection	(\$931,545)
05-008 La Honda Creek White Barn Structural Rehabilitation	(\$517,542)
05-009 La Honda Creek Redwood Cabin Removal and Site Restoration	(\$490,723)
05-010 Restoration Forestry Demonstration Project	(\$1,444,833)
05-011 Lone Madrone Ranch Fence Installation	(\$194,614)
05-012 Paulin Culvert/Bridge Improvements	(\$249,370)
05-013 La Honda Parking and Trailhead Access – Implementation	(\$3,597,875)
05-014 Lone Madrone Corrals	(\$57,000)
05-015 Upper La Honda Creek Land Conservation (Eberhard)	(\$1,026,305)
Total Portfolio Expenditures:	(\$10,890,844)
Portfolio Balance Remaining (Proposed):	\$842,156

PRIOR BOARD AND COMMITTEE REVIEW

- **June 26, 2019:** The Board approved an award of contract with Sicular Environmental Consulting to provide forest assessment and planning services for the La Honda Forest. ([R-19-84](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **July 28, 2021:** The Board reviewed and approved the Forest Health Plan and authorized the preparation of an addendum to the Forest Health Plan to include the recently acquired Woodruff Creek-Folger Parcel. ([R-21-103](#), [meeting minutes](#))
- **October 12, 2022:** The Board reviewed the Forest Health Plan and next steps for the project, which includes developing forest management prescriptions under a forest health THP to improve forest health conditions. ([R-22-116](#), [meeting minutes](#))

- **July 26, 2023:** The Board received a study session presentation on the Woodruff Creek-Folger Parcel Addendum to the La Honda Forest Health Assessment and Management Plan as well as the Project Description for the La Honda Forest Health Project. ([R-23-88, meeting minutes](#))

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

The proposed award of contract is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Environmental review for project implementation would occur through (1) the THP, which is a CEQA equivalent with a robust public process led by CAL FIRE as the lead agency, and (2) the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and the Addendum to the Final EIR prepared for the WFRP, which the Board approved on May 12, 2021 ([R-21-58](#)) and December 14, 2022 ([R-22-145](#)), respectively. District staff would incorporate the associated mitigation measures and Best Management Practices from the environmental review documents into the proposed project and contract documents.

NEXT STEPS

Upon Board approval, the General Manager would enter into a contract agreement with Buena Vista Services, LLC., to prepare a THP for the applicable project areas. Prior to submitting the completed THP to CAL FIRE, staff would present the draft THP to the Planning and Natural Resources (PNR) Committee for review and concurrence.

Staff and Buena Vista Services, LLC., will conduct additional public outreach to increase awareness of the District's forest health work, including this project, across stakeholder groups, regulatory agencies, partners, and the public. The District will conduct pre-consultations and site visits with regulatory and peer agencies to share the project objectives, scope, and schedule with numerous agencies, including CAL FIRE, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Army Corps of Engineers, California Air Resources Board (CARB), California State Water Resources Control Board (WRCB), California Geological Services (CGS), and San Mateo County.

Attachments

1. Project Map

Responsible Department Head:
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