



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

R-17-41
Meeting 17-08
March 22, 2017

AGENDA ITEM 9

AGENDA ITEM

Award Contract with Biosearch Associates for Bear Creek Redwoods Western Pond Turtle Population Assessment, Monitoring and Adaptive Management Plan

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATIONS

Authorize the General Manager to enter into a contract with Biosearch Associates to assess the population of western pond turtles, control invasive fauna, and provide monitoring to guide long-term management actions recommended for implementation at Bear Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve in the amount not to exceed of \$104,000 over thirty-six consecutive months.

SUMMARY

A pond assessment detailing hydrological and structural assessment of the onsite pond features at Bear Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve was completed in February of 2017. The pond assessment also included an Aquatic Species Management Plan that recommends several measures to protect and enhance Western Pond Turtle (WPT) habitat, discusses the merits of controlling invasive aquatic wildlife species (primarily red-eared slider) found within the ponds, obtain a baseline population estimate and determine habitat use and nesting locations for WPT on the site. A WPT mitigation plan (under separate contract) is currently in development specific to the new parking lot and trails proposed adjacent to Upper Lake.

A Request for Proposals and Qualifications was issued on February 8, 2017. A pre-proposal site tour took place on February 16, 2017 and Proposals were submitted on February 24, 2017. The proposals were reviewed and ranked by a panel consisting of two Midpen Natural Resources staff members, The General Manager recommends awarding the contract to Biosearch Associates (Biosearch) for a not to exceed amount of \$104,000 to be expended over a thirty-six consecutive month survey period for the WPT Population Assessment. Biosearch will provide monitoring results to guide long-term management recommendations for the WPT population at the Bear Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve.

MEASURE AA

This is not a Measure AA project.

DISCUSSION

A Preserve Plan and associated Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for Bear Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve was completed in January of 2017 detailing the future of the Preserve (R-

17-15). Site improvements detailed in the Preserve Plan are scheduled for implementation beginning in 2017 in order to prepare the site for public access as early as 2018.

A Pond Assessment detailing hydrological and structural assessment of the onsite pond features was completed in February of 2017. The Pond Assessment also included an Aquatic Species Management Plan that recommends several measures to protect and enhance WPT habitat, and discusses the merits of controlling invasive aquatic wildlife species (primarily red-eared slider) found within the ponds. A WPT mitigation plan (under separate contract) is currently in development specific to the new parking lot and trails proposed adjacent to Upper Lake, adjacent to the former Alma College area.

Services authorized under this contract will complete a western pond turtle population assessment, provide monitoring, and develop potential adaptive management scenarios and responses to mitigate impacts of Preserve use and development. Annual monitoring will be conducted at Upper and Lower Lake for a thirty-six consecutive months to acquire baseline data, determine if additional upland habitat use studies are needed, and to propose and begin implementation of a cost-effective long-term monitoring protocol that includes control of an invasive, non-native species of turtle (red-eared slider) that competes with the native western pond turtle.

Consultant Selection

A Request for Proposals and Qualifications was issued on February 8, 2017 and was sent to 14 firms in the discipline of biological services as well as posted on the District's website. A pre-proposal site tour was held at the project site on February 16, 2017 and was attended by seven (7) persons from six (6) firms. Two (2) well qualified teams submitted proposals by the February 24, 2017 deadline. The proposals were reviewed and ranked by an internal panel who recommend awarding the contract to Biosearch Associates, as the most qualified and best suited for the project based on their response to the RFPQ, proposed approach, examples of past success with similar projects, and responses to follow up questions during a telephone interview.

FISCAL IMPACT

The contract with Biosearch Associates is a multi-year contract anticipated to not exceed \$104,000 over a period of thirty-six consecutive months. The contract will extend into Fiscal Year FY2019-20 upon satisfactory execution of services during each preceding year. The proposed FY2016-17 through FY2019-20 budgets outline the funding for scope of services associated with this multi-year contract.

Fiscal Year Exercised	Budgeted Population Assessment for WPT	Proposed Expenditures for Population Assessment for WPT
Year 1: 16/17	\$20,000	\$20,000
Year 2: 17/18	\$42,000	\$42,000
Year 3: 18/19	\$22,000	\$22,000
Year 4: 19/20	\$20,000	\$20,000
Total Cost	\$104,000	\$104,000

BOARD COMMITTEE REVIEW

Preserve Plan Actions incorporate extensive direction from the District's Board of Directors and Planning and Natural Resources Committee.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act. Additional notice was provided to neighbors, Bear Creek Redwoods tenants, and other interested parties on March 17, 2017.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

This item is not a project subject to the California Environmental Quality Act. This project consists of biological research conducted on District lands. The research study will be conducted by qualified biological professionals under a study design approved by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Initiating the research does not constitute a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), as it will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment [CEQA Guidelines Section 15060(c)(2)]. Any proposed future actions will be subject to environmental review to be completed at a later date, prior to any physical implementation.

NEXT STEPS

If approved for award of contract, Biosearch will begin the assessment of the Western pond turtle population. The first year of fieldwork and monitoring will take place from April to October of 2017. The first year's monitoring report will be submitted in December of 2017. Fieldwork and annual reporting will be repeated on an annual basis for subsequent years.

Attachment

1. Map of Project Area.

Responsible Department Head:
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Prepared by:
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Graphics:
Nathan Greig, GIS Technician, Planning (GIS)



Western Pond Turtle Population Study Area

ROADS

- Public
- Private
- Patrol Use Only

TRAILS*

- Improve Existing Road for Increased Use
- Construct New Trail
- Multi-Use

FEATURES

- Gate
- Waterbody
- Stream

*As proposed within the
Bear Creek Redwoods
Preserve Plan, 2017



Miles
0
0.25
0.5

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(MROSD)
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