



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

R-17-101
Meeting 17-18
August 9, 2017

AGENDA ITEM 11

AGENDA ITEM

Agreement with RECON Environmental Inc. to Maintain Plants at Nine Revegetation Sites for Three Years

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Determine that the recommended action has been evaluated previously under the California Environmental Quality Act.
2. Authorize the General Manager to approve an agreement with RECON Environmental Inc. for an amount not-to-exceed \$615,780 to maintain plants at nine revegetation sites for three years.
3. Authorize a 10% contingency of \$61,578 to be expended only if necessary to cover unforeseen conditions for a not-to-exceed total contract amount of \$677,358.

SUMMARY

The work to be accomplished under this contract will initiate large-scale habitat restoration at nine sites spread across the District including Mt. Umunhum. This is a critical step in reestablishing normal ecological function at areas previously disturbed by destructive land use practices. In previous years, the District typically has installed plants on relatively few restoration sites, and the work anticipated under this contract is a dramatic increase. As Measure AA construction projects are now getting under way, and subsequent plant installation and associated tasks follow, this year represents habitat restoration at a level three times higher than in the past.

This agreement will authorize RECON Environmental Inc. to maintain and monitor approximately 3,500 plants at nine revegetation sites on District preserves, primarily in association with the development of the Mount Umunhum Summit, Road and Trail in Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve, but also at other construction project sites in Monte Bello, Russian Ridge, La Honda Creek, and Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserves. The scope of work includes watering installed plants, weeding, and maintenance of plant protection devices in compliance with project permits, mitigation measures per the environmental review, and project design criteria. Additionally, the contractor will report annually and monitor the survival of installed plants and reduction in weeds. As necessary, replanting will occur. This work is anticipated to be completed from 2017 through 2019 for a total not-to-exceed amount of \$677,358. The first year of work, during Fiscal Year 2017-2018, will cost \$245,163. Sufficient funds are included in the Fiscal Year 2017-2018 Budget for the first year of work. [KL1]

DISCUSSION

With construction of numerous Measure AA projects now underway, many projects require installation of native plants to mitigate for projects impacts, as a permit condition, or per District policies and practices to restore construction sites or degraded areas to natural and aesthetic conditions. Various projects at Mt. Umunhum Summit, Road, and Trail will require new planting starting September 9, 2017. Likewise, new plantings required at trail, parking lot, and bridge construction sites in other preserves will be installed primarily by volunteers almost every weekend through the remainder of the planting season (mid-November). Most installed plants require three to five years of watering and weeding before they are established well enough to survive on their own. In total, in fall 2017, six new project sites will be planted in addition to three existing planting projects, all of which require additional years of maintenance during the establishment period.

The nine projects under this agreement are:

- Site 1. Mount Umunhum Summit Restoration, Sierra Azul OSP - restore constructed summit to natural and aesthetic conditions. Some planting occurred in 2016, most of the planting will occur in 2017.
- Site 2. Mount Umunhum Road Mitigation, Sierra Azul OSP - new site to replace rare plants removed by road construction.
- Site 3. Mount Umunhum Trail Mitigation, Sierra Azul OSP – initial planting at this site occurred in 2016 for partial fulfillment of permit conditions. New planting will occur in 2017 to complete fulfillment of permit conditions.
- Site 4. Bald Mountain Parking Lot, Sierra Azul OSP – originally planted in 2014 during drought, requires additional years of planting and plant establishment.
- Site 5. Woods Trail Mitigation, Sierra Azul OSP - new site to be planted in 2017 per permit requirements for Mt Umunhum Trail.
- Site 6. Stevens Creek Nature Trail Mitigation, Monte Bello OSP – new site to be planted for permit conditions per bridge and trail improvements.
- Site 7. Mindego Gateway, Russian Ridge OSP – originally planted in 2013 during drought, requires additional years of planting and plant establishment.
- Site 8. Sears Ranch Bioswale and Vegetated Depressions, La Honda Creek OSP – new site to be planted in 2017 around newly constructed parking lot.
- Site 9. Harkins Bridge Mitigation, Purisima Creek Redwoods OSP – new site to be planted in 2017 around newly relocated bridge.

The tasks included under this three-year agreement to maintain restoration sites through the plant establishment period are the watering of 3,537 plants 57 times, weeding plant basins and the surrounding area 23 times, maintaining cages and plastic tubes around some plants to discourage browsing by wildlife, replacing plants if survival rate is less than 80 percent, monitoring the survival of plants, and reporting on an annual basis.

Staff evaluated several options to determine if this work could be accomplished by volunteers or field staff in the Land and Facilities Department. Volunteers have been integrated into the habitat restoration program where possible. For example, of the eight new sites being planted this year, six will be planted by volunteers. However, the amount of work and expertise required for establishing the plants over three years is not a good match for volunteers. Likewise, field staff is fully committed to other projects at this time.

Hiring a contractor to meet this increase in plant establishment responsibilities is considered an interim measure. Staff will evaluate the level of future projects and evaluate the roles of staff, volunteers, the Conservation Corps, and grants to determine the most effective combination going forward.

A Request for Bids was sent to fourteen contracting firms, local builders' exchanges, and posted on the District website on June 8, 2017. Six firms attended a mandatory pre-bid tour on June 19, 2017. Two addenda were issued. Four proposals were received with results shown below indicating this was a competitive process.

| Bidder | Location | Total Bid | Percent Difference from Cost Estimate of \$680,000 |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|---|
| Ecological Concerns Inc. | Santa Cruz, CA | \$673,140.00 | -1.0% |
| Hanford ARC | Sonoma, CA | \$694,480.00 | +2.1% |
| Habitat Restoration Sciences, Inc. | Vista, CA | \$774,339.00 | +13.9% |
| RECON | San Diego, CA | \$615,779.96 | -9.4% |

After thorough review of the proposals, RECON Environmental Inc. of San Diego, CA was determined to be the lowest responsible and responsive bidder. RECON has recent experience installing and maintaining revegetation sites in remote natural areas throughout California. The base cost for these services will not exceed \$615,780 over the three-year period. In addition, if necessary to cover unforeseen conditions, a ten percent contingency (\$61,578) is recommended, raising the not-to-exceed amount of this contract to \$677,358.

FISCAL IMPACT

The Natural Resources Department FY2017-18 Budget includes \$428,500 for plant maintenance. There are sufficient funds in the Department budget to cover the recommended action. However, several of the projects included in this contract were not anticipated during the Action Plan development process and therefore funds were not specifically allocated for those projects in the Natural Resources Department FY2017-18 Budget. Staff anticipates the need to amend the Natural Resources budget to cover the costs for these unanticipated project costs, and will look for cost savings from existing projects for this purpose. Additional funds will be requested in Fiscal Years 2018-19, and 2019-20 for these restoration site maintenance costs.

| | FY 2018 | FY 2019 | FY 2020 |
|--|------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Natural Resources Budget | \$428,500 | | |
| Spent-to-Date (as of 07/11/17) | \$0 | | |
| Encumbrances | \$0 | | |
| Award of Proposed Contract – Hanging Sedge Removal | \$52,900 | \$30,000 | \$0 |
| Award of Proposed Contract - Plant Establishment at Multiple Sites | \$245,163 | \$150,628 | \$76,476 |
| Budget Remaining (Proposed): | \$130,437 | | |

BOARD COMMITTEE REVIEW

This item was not previously reviewed by a Board committee.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

Each of these planting sites were included in the evaluation under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the original public access project and found to have no significant unavoidable impacts. See the table below for the citation of the CEQA document relevant to each planting site. The CEQA review for the work authorized under this contract was completed at the time the construction for each project was authorized by the Board.

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|--|--|
| Mount Umunhum Summit Restoration Mount Umunhum Road Mitigation Mount Umunhum Trail Mitigation Woods Trail Mitigation Bald Mountain Parking Lot | Mount Umunhum Environmental Restoration and Public Access Project Environmental Impact Report, Ascent Environmental, Inc. May 2012. |
| Stevens Creek Nature Trail Mitigation | Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration, Monte Bello Open Space Preserve Bridge Projects, Environmental Science Associates, January 2016. |
| Mindego Gateway | Mindego Gateway Project Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration, LSA Associates, Inc., February 2012. |
| Sears Ranch Bioswale | La Honda Master Plan Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, August 2012. |
| Harkins Bridge Mitigation | Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration, Harkins Bridge Replacement Project, |

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|--|---|
| | Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, October 17, 2014. |
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NEXT STEPS

Upon approval by the Board of Directors, the General Manager will execute an agreement with RECON to maintain the nine revegetation sites through the plant establishment period over the next three years.

Attachment:

1. Location Map

Responsible Department Head:

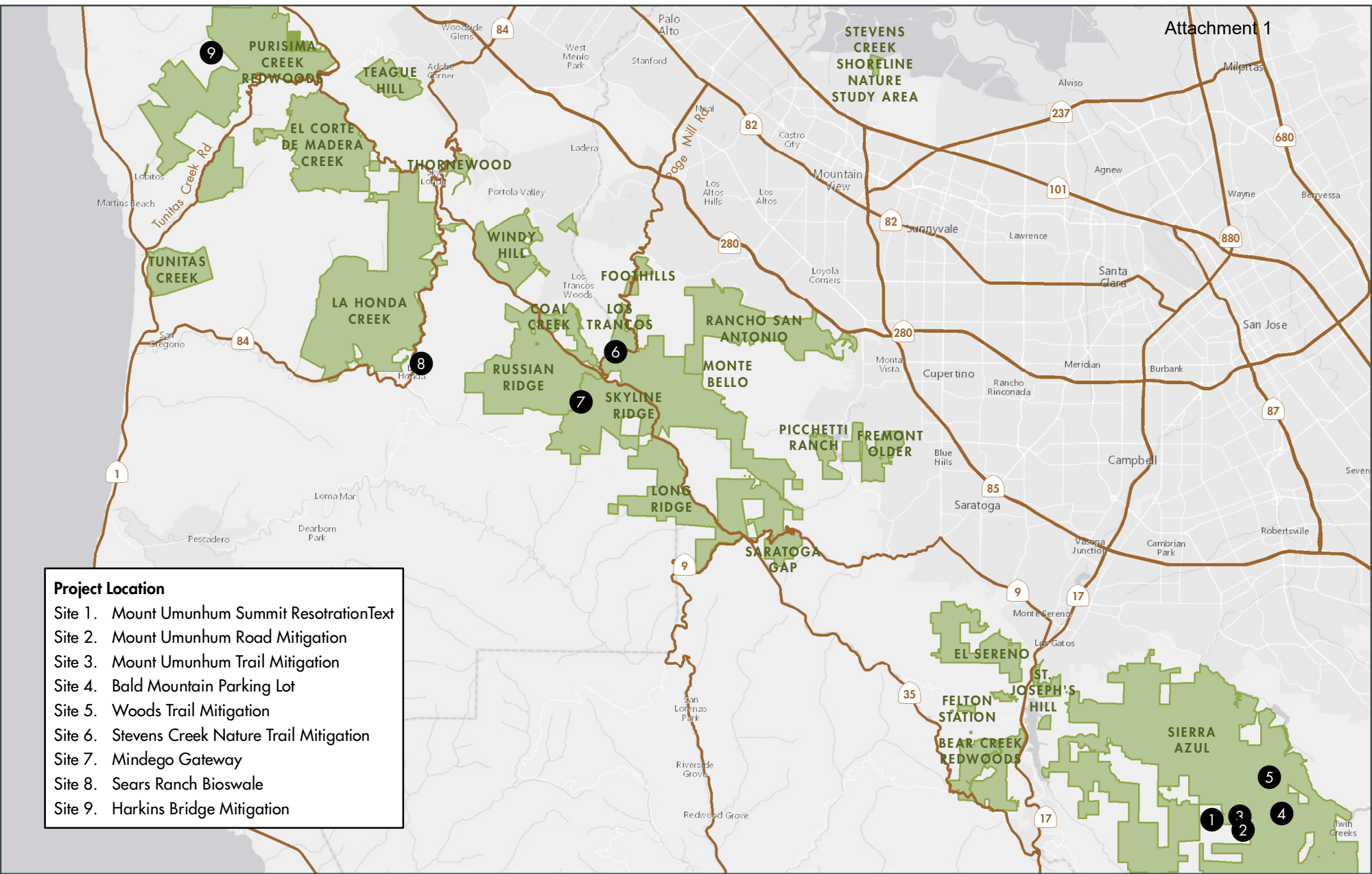
Kirk Lenington, Natural Resources Department

Prepared by:

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Graphics prepared by:

Jamie Hawk, GIS Technician



Project Location

- Site 1. Mount Umunhum Summit ResotrationText
- Site 2. Mount Umunhum Road Mitigation
- Site 3. Mount Umunhum Trail Mitigation
- Site 4. Bald Mountain Parking Lot
- Site 5. Woods Trail Mitigation
- Site 6. Stevens Creek Nature Trail Mitigation
- Site 7. Mindego Gateway
- Site 8. Sears Ranch Bioswale
- Site 9. Harkins Bridge Mitigation

Location Map

- MROSD Preserves
- # Revegetation Site

Midpeninsula Regional
 Open Space District
 (MROSD)
 May 2017



While the District strives to use the best available digital data, these data do not represent a legal survey and are merely a graphic illustration of geographic features.