



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

R-17-103
Meeting 17-18
August 9, 2017

AGENDA ITEM 3

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Authorization to Award Contract to Ecological Concerns, Inc. for Invasive Weed Removal in FY2017-18, and FY2018-19

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 enter into a multi-year contract with Ecological Concerns, Inc. of Santa Cruz, California to provide invasive species management services in Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve in FY2017-18 and FY2018-19 for a base contract amount of \$46,000.
3. Authorize a 15% contingency of \$6,900 to be expended only if necessary to cover unforeseen conditions, for a not-to-exceed total contract amount of \$52,900.

SUMMARY

The work, considered an early detection / rapid response activity (EDRR), consists of manual removal of invasive species within Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space District in FY2017-18 and FY2018-19 in a manner consistent with the District's Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Program to control non-native plants and weeds. EDRR of small populations of invasive species allows for eradication in most cases and reduces the likelihood of an expensive control program. A Request for Bids was sent to eleven (11) selected vegetation management firms; and four (4) proposals were received. After thorough review of the proposals, staff recommends awarding the contract to Ecological Concerns, Inc. of Santa Cruz, CA which is the lowest responsible and responsive bidder. The cost for these services will not exceed \$52,900 over two years.

DISCUSSION

Background

The District manages invasive plants on Preserves to protect and restore the natural environment and to support conservation grazing. District field staff, contractors, the California Conservation Corps, and volunteers all assist in management of vegetation on Preserves. Contractors are most frequently used for large infestations and for invasive species that have very specific treatment timing. District staff oversees the work of contractors, which includes monitoring by District biologists when contractors are working near sensitive areas such as ponds with rare aquatic species. The District uses IPM practices when managing invasive plants and weeds, and the

contractor is required to follow thirty-one best management practices to protect the environment and human health.

This fiscal year, District staff are developing a robust EDRR program per the IPM Program five-year implementation plan. Even the best prevention efforts cannot stop all invasive species. Early detection, rapid assessment and rapid response is a critical second defense against the establishment of invasive populations. EDRR enhances the likelihood that localized invasive populations will be found, contained, and eradicated before they become widely established. EDRR can decrease range expansion, and avoid the need for long-term control efforts, saving the District money.

Hanging Sedge (*Carex pendula*) is an early detection / rapid response species of concern for the District. This sedge is only found in one location on District property, the riparian area surrounding Purisima Creek. Two additional species of concern have also been identified for within Purisima Creek Redwoods OSP, panic veldt grass (*Ehrharta erecta*) and cape ivy (*Delairea odorata*). Total eradication is not expected of Hanging Sedge due to a population on private property adjacent to the District; District staff will reach out to the private property owner. Total eradication of both panic veldt grass and cape ivy is expected within two years due to an early detection/rapid response. Once this contract has been completed, all project sites will be converted to staff maintenance sites.

Contractor Selection

The Request for Bids (RFB) was issued on July 5, 2017 and advertised in local newspapers and on the District website. Eleven firms known to have experience managing vegetation in park environments were directly notified by staff of the RFB. Seven firms attended a mandatory pre-bid tour on July 20, 2017. Addendums were issued on July 24, 2017 and July 26, 2017 clarifying questions on the Request for Bids during and after the pre-bid tour.

Bids were due on August 2, 2017. The results are as follows:

Bidder		Location	Total Bid for two years	Percent of Cost Estimate of \$56,000
1	Go Native, Inc.	Montara, CA	\$58,750	4.9%
2	Ecological Concerns, Inc.	Santa Cruz, CA	\$46,000	-17.9%
3	Shelterbelt Builders	San Francisco, CA	\$88,800	58.6%
4	Handford ARC	Sonoma, CA	\$67,370	20.3%

Ecological Concerns, Inc. is the lowest responsible and responsive bidder for all four projects. The duration of the contract will be a two-year term, for a total of \$52,900.

FISCAL IMPACT

The Natural Resources Department FY2017-18 Budget includes \$428,500 for Facility Maintenance – Resource Management and Landscaping of which \$30,000 is budgeted for this

fiscal year's work for this project. There are sufficient funds in the Natural Resources budget to cover the cost of this recommendation. The recommended action is not funded by Measure AA.

	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		

A similar amount is projected for FY2018-19 Budget request for Facility Maintenance – Resource Management and Landscaping of which \$30,000 will be budgeted for the remaining contract term.

BOARD COMMITTEE REVIEW

No Board Committee review is required.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice of this Agenda Item was provided per the Brown Act.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

The vegetation management activities covered by this contract have been previously reviewed in the Final Environmental Impact Report for the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District Integrated Pest Management Program approved by the Board on December 10, 2014 under the California Environmental Quality Act, and the associated mitigation measures have been incorporated into the project.

NEXT STEPS

Upon approval by the Board of Directors, the General Manager will enter into a two year contract with Ecological Concerns, Inc. of Santa Cruz, CA.

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