



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

R-19-03
Meeting 19-01
January 9, 2019

AGENDA ITEM 4

AGENDA ITEM

Award of Contract for Botanical Services

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Authorize the General Manager to enter into a multi-year contract with Vollmar Natural Lands Consulting of Berkeley, California to provide botanical services to support capital and operational projects for a base amount not to exceed \$72,460.
2. Authorize a 10% contingency of \$7,246 to be awarded if necessary to cover unforeseen conditions, for a total contract amount not-to-exceed \$79,706.

SUMMARY

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) seeks assistance from a qualified consultant to complete botanical surveys and prepare mitigation recommendations at five project sites. A Request for Qualifications and Proposals (RFQP) was issued on October 8, 2018. The General Manager recommends awarding a contract to Vollmar Natural Lands Consulting to provide botanical services for a base amount not to exceed \$72,460, and authorizing a 10% contingency amount of \$7,246. The contract work is anticipated to span two fiscal years. There are sufficient funds in the adopted Fiscal Year (FY) 2018-19 budget to cover the anticipated scope of services for this fiscal year. Additional funds would be included in the FY2019-20 budget to fund the second year of contract work.

BACKGROUND

Capital and operational projects that affect the physical environment have the potential to impact native California species and/or the jurisdictional areas regulated by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and/or U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) mitigation measures or project specific permits often require biological surveys, documentation, and mitigation of potential impacts to natural resources.

The District currently holds limited or no documentation of sensitive or rare species occurrences at five project sites for projects in the FY2018-19 Budget and three-year Capital Improvement and Action Plan. The table below outlines the required tasks at each of these five project sites, followed by a written definition of each task. These tasks encompass the scope of work under the recommended award of contract.

Site #	Preserve	Project Site	Required Project Tasks				Technical Memo
			Rare Plant Survey	General Vegetation survey	Mitigation Plan	Vegetation Rapid Assessment	
1	La Honda Creek	La Honda Creek Loop Trail	X	X	X		X
2	Coal Creek	Alpine Road Trail Repair	X	X	X		X
3	Windy Hill	Hawthorns – Public Access Site Plan	X	X			X
4	Purisima Creek Redwoods	Irish Ridge and Lobitos Creek Trail - Potential Restoration	X	X			X
5	N/A ¹	Potential Johnston Ranch Uplands Acquisition	X	X		X	X

Project Tasks:

- *Rare Plant Survey:* The California Native Plant Society (CNPS) has developed protocol-level rare plant survey methods for documenting the presence of rare plant species. These accepted methods will be used to locate, document, and avoid populations of listed rare plant species.
- *General Vegetation Survey:* Floristic vegetation surveys provide assurances that rare plant species were not overlooked and provide a cursory look at the biodiversity of a site to identify important botanical and habitat resources for protection, including jurisdictional wetlands.
- *Mitigation Plan:* Where unavoidable impacts to listed species or jurisdictional areas may occur due to a project, a mitigation plan will be developed to offset impacts that includes plant restoration mitigation locations and re-vegetation ratios.
- *Vegetation Rapid Assessment:* The CNPS's vegetation rapid assessment, a well-established protocol to determine baseline conditions at a specific location, will be followed to facilitate effective land management decisions for the District's ecosystems and infrastructure. By using this method, biologists and resource managers gain a broad ecological perspective, as the full ecological variation across landscapes is reflected in the vegetation assessments.
- *Technical Memo:* For each project site and/or task, a technical memo will be written to include in the project file, and if needed provide to regulatory agencies. These memos will document the data collected to scientifically inform land management activities, including any recommended mitigation measures.

¹ If Johnston Ranch's ownership transfers to the District, it would become a part of Miramontes Ridge Open Space Preserve.

DISCUSSION

Staff issued a RFQP on October 8, 2018 with the following consultant requirements:

- Knowledge of plant taxonomy and natural community ecology;
- Familiarity with the plants of the area, including special status species;
- Familiarity with natural communities of the area, including special status natural communities;
- Experience conducting floristic field surveys or experience with floristic surveys conducted under the direction of an experienced surveyor;
- Familiarity with appropriate state and federal statutes related to plants and plant collecting;
- Experience with analyzing impacts of development on native plant species and natural communities; and
- Experience with CDFW Section 1600 permits (Streambed Alteration Agreements).

Staff circulated the RFQP through email and posting on the BidSync website. Staff issued addenda on October 17 and 29 to add an additional project site to the scope of work, the proposed Johnston Ranch Uplands Purchase, and to answer questions and clarify the RFQP. The following six firms submitted proposals by the November 7, 2018 deadline.

Firm	Location	Proposed Fees (over 2 years)
Alfred Schotz	Notasulga, AL	\$ 17,386
Sequoia Ecological Consulting, Inc.	Danville, CA	\$ 62,093
Vollmar Natural Lands Consulting	Berkeley, CA	\$ 72,460
Horizon Water and Environment, LLC.	Oakland, CA	\$ 86,696
AECOM Technical Services, Inc.	Oakland, CA	\$ 125,036
Ecological Concerns, Inc.	Santa Cruz, CA	\$ 145,019

Evaluation criteria were determined prior to the release of the RFQP that included the quality of the proposal, project approach, and firm expertise. After careful review of all proposals, Vollmar Natural Lands Consulting was deemed most qualified and best suited for the project at a fair and reasonable price, based on their response to the RFQP, proposed project approach, qualifications, and fee. Vollmar Natural Lands Consulting brings 22 years of experience of rare plant surveys within the District's region (a requirement of a protocol-level survey); wetland delineations that adhere to USACE protocols; CDFW's standards for riparian habitat mapping; and experience negotiating various permit requirements with regulatory agencies.

FISCAL IMPACT

The table below breaks down the fee proposal by site:

Site #	Project Site	FY 2018-19	FY 2019-20	Total
1	La Honda Creek: La Honda Creek Loop Trail	\$8,745	\$11,968	\$20,713
2	Coal Creek: Alpine Road Trail Repair	\$8,745	\$11,968	\$20,713
3	Windy Hill: Hawthorns – Public Access Site Plan	\$5,000	\$3,239	\$8,239
4	Purisima Creek Redwoods: Irish Ridge and Lobitos Creek Trail Potential Restoration Site	\$6,259	\$2,024	\$8,283
5	Potential Johnston Ranch Uplands Acquisition	\$12,000	\$9,758	\$21,758
	Approval of contract (includes 10% contingency):	\$40,749	\$38,957	\$79,706

Additional project and Measure AA portfolio information for project sites 1 and 2 are included below. Each table outlines the project budget, Measure AA Portfolio costs-to-date, and the fiscal impact related to the contract that applies to each project. Tasks included in the contract are required components of each Measure AA project and are eligible for Measure AA funding.

Site 1: La Honda Creek Loop Trail – Project MAA07-011

Project # MAA07-011 La Honda Creek Loop Trail	FY2018-19	FY2019-20	TOTAL
Budget:	\$197,100	\$200,000	\$397,100
Spent-to-Date (as of 12/13/2018):	(\$66,232)		(\$66,232)
Encumbrances:	(\$38,532)		(\$38,532)
Award of Contract (proposed):	(\$8,745)	(\$11,968)	(\$20,713)
Budget Remaining (Proposed):	\$83,591	\$188,032	\$271,623

MAA07 La Honda Creek – Portfolio Allocation:	\$14,825,000
Life-to-Date Spent (as of 12/13/2018):	(\$11,965,356)
Encumbrances:	(\$109,854)
Award of Contract (proposed):	(\$20,713)
Portfolio Balance Remaining (Proposed):	\$2,729,077

Site 2: Coal Creek Alpine Road Trail Repair – Project MAA10-001

Project # MAA10-001 Alpine Road Trail, Coal Creek	FY2018-19	FY2019-20	TOTAL
Budget:	\$278,557	\$320,000	\$598,557
Spent-to-Date (as of 12/13/2018):	(\$3,826)		(\$3,826)
Encumbrances:	\$0		\$0
Award of Contract (proposed):	(\$8,745)	(\$11,968)	(\$20,713)
Budget Remaining (Proposed):	\$265,986	\$308,032	\$574,018

MAA10 Coal Creek – Portfolio Allocation:	\$8,017,000
Life-to-Date Spent (as of 12/13/2018):	(\$25,775)
Encumbrances:	\$0
Award of Contract (proposed):	(\$20,713)
Portfolio Balance Remaining (Proposed):	\$7,970,512

Sufficient funds are included in the current Fiscal Year (FY) 2018-19 budget to cover the recommended actions for all five project sites referenced in the contract. Funding will be included in the FY2019-20 budget for the second year of contract work, as part of the annual Budget and Action Plan process.

BOARD COMMITTEE REVIEW

A Board Committee did not previously review this item.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act. Public notice was also sent to 508 interested parties by US mail and/or electronic mail.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

This item is not a project subject to the California Environmental Quality Act. The CEQA guidelines provide that “where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in questions may have a significant effect on the environment” the activity is not subject to CEQA (Guidelines § 15061(b)). Projects supported by these surveys will be subject to future CEQA evaluation.

NEXT STEPS

Following Board approval, the General Manager will execute a contract with Vollmar Natural Lands Consulting, for a two-year period beginning in FY2018-19.

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