



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

PROCUREMENT AGENDA ITEM

R-26-127
Meeting 26-20
August 26, 2026

AGENDA ITEM 5

AGENDA ITEM

Award of Contract for the Kings Mountain Manzanita Ecosystem Resiliency Project at El Corte de Madera Creek Open Space Preserve

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Authorize the General Manager to enter into a contract with Forster & Kroeger Landscaping Maintenance, Inc., for the Kings Mountain Manzanita Ecosystem Resiliency Project at El Corte de Madera Creek Open Space Preserve for a base amount not to exceed \$346,135.
2. Authorize a 10% contingency in the amount of \$34,614 to be reserved for unanticipated issues, bringing the total not-to-exceed contract amount to \$380,749.

DISCUSSION

The Kings Mountain Manzanita Ecosystem Resiliency Project (Project) is one of two sub-projects comprising the larger Wildland Fire Capacity Project. It would implement selective vegetation management at El Corte de Madera Creek Open Space Preserve to improve habitat for Kings Mountain manzanita (*Arctostaphylos regismontana*), a rare native shrub found only in the Santa Cruz Mountains, while advancing broader forest health and wildfire resiliency goals.

In the absence of natural disturbance, particularly periodic fire, vegetation density has increased in portions of the Project area, resulting in negative impacts to Kings Mountain manzanita, a rare, endemic species specific to this region of the Santa Cruz Mountains. The high quantities of overstory and understory vegetation (native and nonnative) within Kings Mountain manzanita habitat are disrupting its ability to successfully compete for essential nutrients, sun exposure, and water. The Project would mimic some habitat-opening effects of natural disturbance by selectively removing smaller competing vegetation while retaining dominant canopy trees, sensitive habitat features, and native forest structure across 39.1 acres within the Preserve. This work would improve access to light, water, and nutrients for retained trees, supporting more vigorous growth, greater long-term resilience and carbon storage, and a reduced risk of forest loss in the event of a high-severity wildfire.

The Project supports the larger Wildland Fire Resiliency Program by incorporating ecologically sensitive vegetation management. The Project incorporates specific measures to protect sensitive nature resources and public safety including the following:

- Enhancements to support the population of Kings Mountain manzanita;

- Noise avoidance measures within marbled murrelet habitat;
- Appropriate buffers for sensitive biological resources;
- Limiting ground disturbance;
- Internal and external coordination and communication to ensure safe public access; and
- Application of seasonal (timeframe) and environmental restrictions.

Temporary trail delays or short-duration closures may be required near active work areas to protect public and worker safety. District staff would coordinate closures, signage, and public communications internally and externally to maintain safe preserve access while allowing work to proceed efficiently.

Of the \$346,135 base contract amount, approximately \$252,000 is eligible for grant reimbursement, including approximately \$40,000 from the California State Coastal Conservancy and \$212,628 from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. These grants support implementation of the larger Wildland Fire Capacity Project, including vegetation management, habitat protection, ecosystem resiliency, and wildfire resilience in fire-prone landscapes. Awarding the recommended contract would allow the District to use available grant funding for this sub-project while meeting applicable grant, procurement, environmental review, and reporting requirements.

BUDGET / FISCAL IMPACT

The current fiscal year budget contains:

- ☒ sufficient funds.
- ☐ insufficient funds; the next quarterly budget update will include a reallocation of unspent funds from other budgets to cover this expenditure.
- ☐ insufficient funds; approval of this item requires a fiscal year budget augmentation.
- ☐ future fiscal year budgets will include additional funds to complete the contracted work.

Measure AA

- ☒ No, this contract is not part of a Measure AA project.
- ☐ Yes, this contract is part of a Measure AA project.

PROCUREMENT PROCESS AND SELECTION

Contractor selection

A Request for Bids (RFB) was issued on July 15, 2026, via BidNet Direct. A legal notice was posted in the San Mateo County Times, and a link to the solicitation was posted on the District website. Staff also directly contacted qualified firms about the RFB. One optional pre-bid site walk was held on July 23, 2026, with five contractors in attendance.

The District received one bid by the deadline on July 31, 2026, from Forster & Kroeger Landscaping Maintenance, Inc., of San Rafael, CA. The District has determined that Forster & Kroeger Landscaping Maintenance, Inc.'s bid is responsive and that the contractor is responsible.

Contractor	Location	Base Bid (Project Manager's Estimate \$291,000)
Forster & Kroeger Landscaping Maintenance, Inc.	San Rafael, CA	\$346,135, 18.9% above estimate

To meet federal procurement requirements when a single bid is received, the Project Manager has completed additional analysis to ensure that the bid pricing is consistent with market rates and that it is in the best interest of the District and the Project to proceed with the single bid rather than re-soliciting bids. Based on this analysis, the General Manager considers the bid to be consistent with market rates and recommends awarding the contract. The bid of \$346,135 for 39.1 acres is equivalent to approximately \$8,853 per acre treated, which is within the District's estimated range of \$5,000 to \$10,000 per acre for manual forest-health work and it is within 20% of the project manager's estimate. While the project was budgeted near the lower end of that range, District staff believe the bid reflects current market conditions and the labor-intensive work, difficult access, and specialized skills required to complete the work.

PRIOR BOARD ACTION SUPPORTING THE PROJECT

Adoption of a Final Environmental Impact Report for the Wildland Fire Resiliency Program ([R-21-58](#), [minutes](#)).

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act. In addition, staff sent notifications to the following interested parties lists: El Corte de Madera Open Space Preserve and Natural Resource Management.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

The Environmental Impact Report (EIR) prepared for the District's Wildland Fire Resiliency Program, which the Board approved on May 12, 2021 ([R-21-58](#), [Minutes](#)), analyzed the vegetation management activities in the recommended contract. District staff have incorporated the associated mitigation measures and Best Management Practices (BMPs) from the environmental review documents into the project and the contract documents.

NEXT STEPS

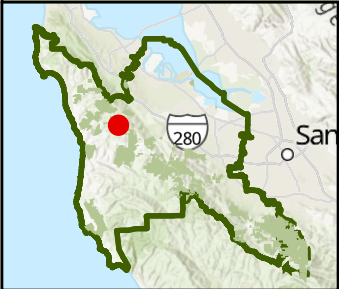
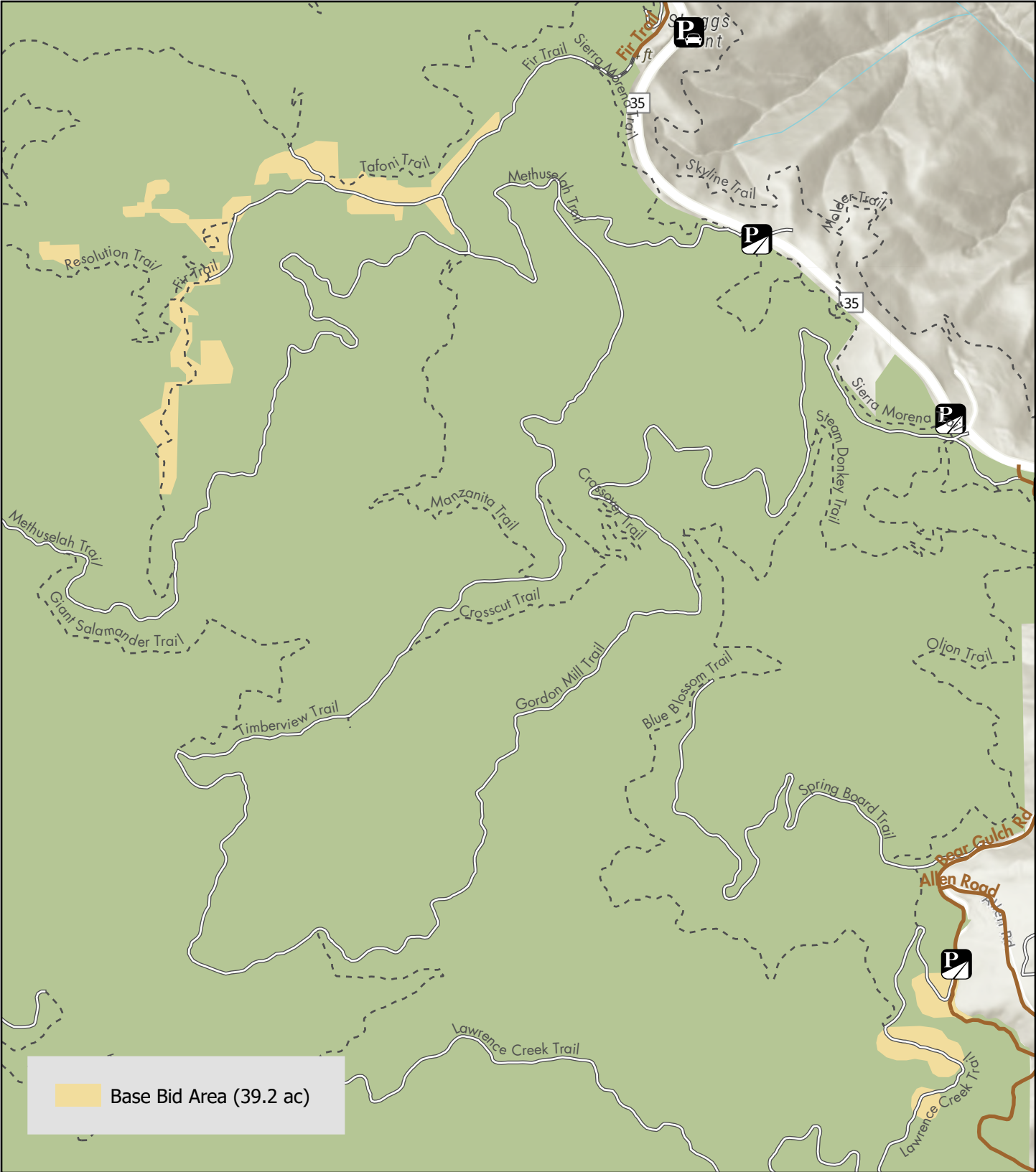
If approved, the General Manager will execute a contract with Forster & Kroeger Landscaping Maintenance, Inc. Work is expected to commence no earlier than September 15, 2026, to avoid potential impacts to endangered Marbled Murrelets, that may use suitable breeding habitat in the area for nesting.

Attachment

1. Project Location Map

Responsible Department Head:
Kirk Lenington, Natural Resources

Prepared by / Graphics prepared by:
Coty Sifuentes-Winter, Senior Resource Management Specialist, Natural Resources



Project Map	
Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, FEMA, Esri, CGIAR, USGS, Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community	2026
Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 10N	

