



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

PROCUREMENT AGENDA ITEM

R-26-33
Meeting 26-08
March 11, 2026

REVISED AGENDA ITEM 7

AGENDA ITEM

Award of Contract to Ecological Concerns, Inc., for the treatment of invasive species to support the Conservation Grazing Program

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Authorize the General Manager to enter into a contract with Ecological Concerns, Inc., of Santa Cruz, California in the amount of \$89,468 for one year of invasive species management services.
2. Authorize the General Manager to extend the contract for three additional years, if the program achieves specific success criteria, for an additional \$296,150, for a total not-to-exceed contract amount of \$385,618 over the four-year term.
3. Authorize a separate 20% contract allowance of \$77,124, specifically for consumable items to perform the contracted work for a combined not-to-exceed contract amount of \$462,742. The allowance will not exceed 20% of the authorized contract amount in any year.

DISCUSSION

Vegetation management to reduce invasive, non-native plants in grasslands within coastal San Mateo County is a core function of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's (District) Conservation Grazing Program that supports long-term ecological health and sustainable land stewardship. This work falls under and is consistent with the District's Integrated Pest Management Program (IPMP), applying only those treatment methods approved by the Board of Directors. These treatments may include manual, mechanical, biological, cultural, and chemical for species identified by the California Invasive Plant Council (Cal-IPC) and other District-adopted priorities. These treatments support the protection and enhancement of native habitat values while maintaining appropriate forage conditions in support of conservation grazing objectives. Implementation is structured through annual work authorizations over a multi-year period, subject to performance and continued consistency with District policy. T

The proposed contract scope of work applies to all grazing units within District preserves with the exception of Cloverdale Ranch and Mindego Ranch, due to their unique natural resource conditions and special-status species considerations that require additional special considerations

and are addressed through separate planning and procurement processes to ensure appropriate site-specific review.

Anticipated Annual Contract Amount in Future Years

Vegetation management work in support of the Conservation Grazing Program will be prioritized and scheduled annually at the District's discretion based on program needs. If the District elects to extend the contract beyond Year 1, the contractor may request an annual adjustment to labor rates, not to exceed five percent (5%) per year, to reflect documented increases in labor costs. Any adjustment must be based on the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Employment Cost Index for Private Industry Workers in the Pacific Census Division, include supporting data, and is subject to District approval. Any approved increase to the base contract amount shall be limited to labor rate adjustments only and shall not be used to expand the authorized scope of work.

Allowance Amount

A separate 20% contract allowance of \$77,124 is requested for consumable items (e.g., chain oil, erosion control material, herbicide) The proposed contract includes this allowance because consumable use varies by site conditions and by the treatment methods implemented each annual work period (manual, mechanical, and/or pesticide-based). The District authorizes consumables only as needed, reimburses only actual expenses, and verifies costs through invoices. The authorized allowance may be underutilized if the District shifts work toward lower-material methods (e.g., manual treatment). Any unused allowance would remain unspent.

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 project budgets to cover for 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 December 22, 2026, via BidNet Direct. Legal notices were 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 mandatory pre-bid site walk was held on January 9, 2026, with two (2) contractors in attendance.

The District received 2 bids on January 23, 2026, and Ecological Concerns, Inc., of Santa Cruz, California was determined to be the lowest responsible and responsive bidder.

Contractor	Location	Bid Amount	Project Manager Estimate (\$100,000)
Confluence Restoration	Santa Cruz, CA	\$132,660	+33%
Ecological Concerns, Inc.	Santa Cruz, CA	\$89,467.96	-89% <u>11%</u>

PRIOR BOARD ACTION SUPPORTING THE PROJECT

- March 25, 2008:** Amendment of the Preliminary Use and Management Plans for Tunitas Creek Open Space Preserve; Incorporation of a Grazing Management Plan, Approval of a Categorical Exemption and Grazing Lease for Tunitas Creek Grazing Unit ([R-08-40, meeting minutes](#))
- November 10, 2010:** Amendment of a Preliminary Use and Management Plans for Lobitos Ridge/Elkus Ranch Uplands; Incorporation of a Rangeland Management Plan, Approval of a Negative Declaration and Grazing Lease for Lobitos Ridge/Elkus Uplands ([R-10-99, meeting minutes](#))
- August 22, 2012:** Authorization to Amend the Preliminary Use and Management Plan for Bluebrush Canyon Addition to the Purisima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve to Incorporate a Rangeland Management Plan for the Bluebrush Canyon Grazing Unit, and Authorization to Approve a Grazing Lease for the Bluebrush Canyon Grazing Unit. ([R-12-80, meeting minutes](#)).
- February 26, 2020:** Amendment of a Preliminary Use and Management Plans for Toto Ranch; Incorporation of a Rangeland Management Plan, Approval of a Negative Declaration and Grazing Lease for Toto Ranch ([R-20-09, meeting minutes](#))
- November 10, 2021:** Adoption of a Preliminary Use and Management Plan for Johnston Ranch Uplands; Authorization to enter into a Lease and Management Agreement with POST and Assignment of Grazing Lease; and Determination that these actions are Categorically Exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act; ([R-21-132, meeting minutes](#))

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

The Environmental Impact Report (EIR) prepared for the District's IPM Program, which the Board approved on December 10, 2014 ([R-14-148, Minutes](#)), analyzed the vegetation management activities in the recommended contract. On February 27, 2019, the Board approved

an addendum to the Final EIR for the IPM Program ([R-19-11](#), [Minutes](#)). 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 Ecological Concerns, Inc. Work is expected to commence in March 2026 for calendar year 2026. The District will annually evaluate contractor performance and consider whether to extend the contract for up to a total of four years.

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