



Midpeninsula Regional  
Open Space District


R-13-67  
Meeting 13-17  
July 24, 2013

## AGENDA ITEM 5

### AGENDA ITEM

Authorization to Amend an Agreement with Phytosphere Research for an Additional \$15,000 to Continue Monitoring of Treatment Methods to Suppress the Spread of Sudden Oak Death

### GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

1. Authorize an Amendment to the Agreement with Phytosphere Research for an additional \$15,000 to continue in Calendar Years 2013 and 2014 monitoring of treatment methods to suppress the spread of Sudden Oak Death, for a total contract amount not to exceed \$52,500 

### SUMMARY

The Board of Directors of Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) approved original agreements with Phytosphere Research on October 22, 2008, October 28, 2009, and July 25, 2012 to design treatment of oak trees for the suppression of Sudden Oak Death (SOD) disease and monitor the results (R-08-123, R-09-97, and R-12-66). This amendment would extend the monitoring phase of this research and provide matching funds for a research grant from the U.S. Forest Service.

### DISCUSSION

SOD is a plant disease caused by the fungus-like pathogen *Phytophthora ramorum*, responsible for killing millions of oaks and tanoaks throughout California's forests. On December 14, 2005, the Board of Directors adopted a ten-year plan for addressing SOD, including mapping of potentially resistant trees, treating a select number of specimen-sized trees with fungicide, and establishing a collaborative research fund for SOD research to help guide land management decisions (R-05-122). District staff continues to work with researchers, primarily Phytosphere Research, on all of these SOD tasks, particularly treatment of oaks with fungicide.

In 2007, Drs. Ted Swiecki and Elizabeth Bernhardt with Phytosphere Research were hired to test treatment methods to suppress the spread of SOD in oak stands at Rancho San Antonio, Monte Bello, and El Corte de Madera Open Space Preserves (OSPs). The two treatment methods consist of removing bay trees within 15 feet of oak trees and annual spraying of a fungicide on oak trees.

Phytosphere Research continues to find opportunities for additional funding and collaboration with the US Forest Service and university experts to expand SOD research on District preserves. Drs. Swiecki and Bernhardt have expanded their research to Los Trancos, Russian Ridge and Skyline Ridge OSPs and were the first to document the SOD pathogen causing death of canyon live oaks. They are currently working with District staff and contractor to refine the methods for applying fungicide to protect oak trees.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

With this \$15,000 amendment added to the current contract of \$37,500, the total contract amount will be \$52,500. Funds for this amendment are included in the Natural Resources Department budget for FY2013-14.

Over an eight-year period (2007 through 2014), Phytosphere Research has received \$122,250 in grant funding from the U.S. Forest Service to assist in SOD research on District preserves. The District's matching contributions have been an important incentive for continued funding by the U. S. Forest Service.

**BOARD COMMITTEE REVIEW**

Board committee review for this item was not required.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act.

**CEQA COMPLIANCE**

The SOD treatment activities conducted as a part of this research were included in the Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring Program for the Site-Specific Weed and Pest Management Project approved by the Board on May 9, 2012 (R-12-47). No further CEQA review is required.

**NEXT STEPS**

Upon Board authorization, staff will execute the amendment to the Phytosphere Research agreement to allow continued SOD research on District preserves.

Responsible Department Head:  
Kirk Lenington, Natural Resources Manager

Prepared by:  
Cindy Roessler, Senior Resource Management Specialist

Contact person:  
Cindy Roessler, Senior Resource Management Specialist