



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

R-18-120
Meeting 18-36
October 24, 2018

AGENDA ITEM 5

AGENDA ITEM

Award of Contract for Environmental Review Services to Develop the Prescribed Fire Program

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Authorize the General Manager to enter into a multi-year contract with Panorama Environmental, Inc., of San Francisco, California to provide environmental review services on fire ecology to support the development of the Prescribed Fire Program for an amount not to exceed \$305,280.
2. Authorize a 12% contingency of \$36,634 to be awarded if necessary to cover unforeseen conditions, for a total contract amount not-to-exceed \$341,914.

SUMMARY

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) seeks assistance from a qualified consultant to complete environmental analysis and documentation for the planned Prescribed Fire Program to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). CEQA services include preparing technical studies and analyses, developing project description alternatives, and preparing the draft and final Environmental Impact Report and Mitigation Monitoring Program. A Request for Qualifications and Proposals (RFQP) was issued on July 10, 2018. Staff conducted a pre-proposal conference on July 25, 2018. The General Manager recommends awarding a contract to Panorama Environmental, Inc., to provide CEQA services for a base amount not to exceed of \$305,280, and authorizing a 12% contingency amount of \$36,634. There are sufficient funds in the Fiscal Year 2018-19 project budget to cover the recommended action and anticipated scope of services for this fiscal year.

BACKGROUND

Periodic fires were a part of the historic natural ecological processes on District preserve lands. As a result, many species evolved with fire adaptations and now depend on periodic fire for renewal. Among the ecological benefits of periodic fire are the opening of forests to new generations of younger trees, purging grassland of invasive shrubs, and stimulating seed germination and shoot growth in chaparral. Fire-dependent and fire-adapted communities degrade without the regenerative effects that fire provides, resulting in a reduction of biodiversity within both the plant and animal communities.

On June 2018, the District entered into contract to secure fire ecology services with Spatial Informatics Group, LLC, (R-18-72). The contract with Spatial Informatics Group, LLC., will develop the project description for a new Prescribed Fire Program that will reduce the potential

for catastrophic fires. To support this work, subject matter expertise is necessary to analyze the program, address CEQA requirements, and inform District policy changes.

DISCUSSION

Staff issued a RFQP on July 10, 2018 with the following project design objectives and requirements:

- *Public safety and education:* Wildland fuels in unburned areas can build up to high levels and increase the severity of wildfires.
- *Natural resources response to fire:* Many species of plants on District lands are fire dependent or fire adapted; fire in some natural landscapes can increase biodiversity.
- *Wildfire response training:* Prescribed fires serves as a staff training exercise on how to respond safely to a future wildfire event.
- *Cultural resource enhancement:* Native American tribes on the California central coast burned grasslands to increase grass and forb production, decrease pests in oak woodlands, and increase browsing for game species.
- *Agricultural use of land resources, including grazing lands:* Grass production increases post fire, which helps support local sustainable agriculture.

Staff circulated the RFQP through email and posting on the District website. Staff conducted a pre-proposal conference on July 25, 2018 in which seven (7) firms attended. Staff issued an addendum on August 7, 2018 to clarify and answer questions to the RFQP. The following five (5) firms submitted proposals by the August 17, 2018 deadline:

Firm	Location	Proposed Fees over 3 years	% of Estimate (\$225,000)
Mountain G. Enterprises, Inc.	Felton, CA	\$ 198,400	88 %
Panorama Environmental, Inc.	San Francisco, CA	\$ 305,280	136 %
Ascent Environmental, Inc.	Sacramento, CA	\$ 308,200	137 %
Harris and Associates, Inc.	Concord, CA	\$ 539,185	240 %
FlowWest, LLC	Oakland, CA	\$ 544,260	242 %

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, Panorama Environmental, Inc., was deemed most qualified and best suited for the project based on their response to the RFQP, proposed project approach, qualifications, interview, and fee.

The Panorama Environmental, Inc., fee proposal is \$83,200 above the original cost estimate. The original cost estimate of \$225,000 was based off the EIR for the 2015 Integrated Pest Management Program, which had a similar project approach and timeline. However, it did not include extensive mapping and graphics production, which given current staffing capacity constraints, is now being required as part of this contract. In addition, the project budget was not escalated sufficiently to reflect the current economic climate within the San Francisco Bay Area. For these reasons, the fee proposal is determined to be fair and reasonable.

FISCAL IMPACT

The #80003 *Prescribed Fire Program Development Project* (Project) is a multi-year project. The Fiscal Year (FY) 2018-19 budget includes \$116,000 for this Project. Additional funds are allocated in the Capital Improvement and Action Plan (CIAP) as outlined in the table below. There are sufficient funds in the FY2018-19 budget to cover the expenditures anticipated during this fiscal year related to the recommended action. Increases to the three-year CIAP in FY2019-20 and FY2020-21 will be necessary to cover the total anticipated project expenditures.

<i>Prescribed Fire Program Development</i>	<i>Prior Year Actuals</i>	<i>FY2018-19</i>	<i>FY2019-20</i>	<i>FY2020-21</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
Project #80003 Budget	\$0	\$116,000	\$116,000	\$0	\$232,000
Spent-to-Date (as of 09/17/2018):	\$0	\$0			\$0
Encumbrances:		\$0			\$0
Board Approved Contract with Spatial Informatics Group:		(\$33,750)	(\$34,425)	(\$33,075)	(\$101,250)
Proposed Contract (including 12% contingency):		(\$77,325)	(\$239,658)	(\$24,931)	(\$341,914)
Budget Remaining/ Additional Budget Required (if approved):	\$0	\$4,925	(\$158,083)	(\$58,006)	(\$211,164)

The recommended action is not funded by Measure AA.

BOARD COMMITTEE REVIEW

A Board Committee did not previously review this item. If the Board approves the recommended action, staff will bring early milestone(s) of the Prescribed Fire Program to the Planning and Natural Resources Committee for review and input prior to presenting a more complete program to the full Board.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act. Public notice was also sent to 181 interested parties and tenants by US mail and/or electronic mail.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

This award of contract is not a project subject to the California Environmental Quality Act. Future Board consideration of a Prescribed Fire Program will be subject to CEQA.

NEXT STEPS

Following Board approval, the General Manager will execute a contract with Panorama Environmental, Inc., for a three-year period beginning in FY2018-19. In addition, staff will update and maintain the Fire Management interested parties list for all future outreach efforts for the Prescribed Fire Program. Staff will also work with the consultant to confirm the project workflow and schedule.

Responsible Department Head:

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Prepared by:

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