



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

R-20-135
Meeting 20-27
November 18, 2020

AGENDA ITEM 5

AGENDA ITEM

Award of Contract for District-Wide Habitat Enhancement through Invasive Species Treatment

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATIONS *den*

1. Authorize the General Manager to enter into a contract with Hanford ARC of Petaluma, California in the amount of \$275,000 for one year of invasive species management services.
2. Authorize the General Manager to extend the contract for three additional consecutive years, if the program achieves specific success criteria, at an annual cost of up to \$275,000 for a total not-to-exceed contract amount of \$1,100,000 over the four-year term.

SUMMARY

The recommended contract would implement priority projects listed in Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's (District) annual Integrated Pest Management (IPM) plan to treat priority plant species and improve the quality and diversity of native habitats. The scope of work employs ecologically sensitive vegetation management techniques that include manual, mechanical, biological, cultural, and/or limited chemical (herbicide application) treatment of high priority invasive plant species. The recommended contract with Hanford ARC spans multiple fiscal years and would draw from multiple funding sources. Costs would not exceed \$275,000 per year. If the contracted work annually achieves specific success criteria and is therefore extended for the full four-year period, the total cost would not exceed \$1,100,000. The Fiscal Year 2020-21 (FY21) budget includes sufficient funds to cover the costs through the end of the fiscal year. Funding for future years would be requested as part of the annual Budget and Action Plan process.

BACKGROUND

The goal of the District's IPM Program is to control pests through the consistent implementation of IPM principles to protect and restore the natural environment and provide for human safety and enjoyment while visiting and working on District lands. IPM is a long-term, science-based, decision-making system that uses specific methodologies to manage damage from pests. The District defines pests in its Resource Management Policies as "animals or plants that proliferate beyond natural control and interfere with natural processes, which would otherwise occur on open space lands". Moreover, the District defines target pests as "plant or animal species that have a negative impact on other organisms or the surrounding environment and are targeted for treatment". Meeting IPM objectives requires monitoring site conditions before, during, and after treatment as well as revising methods as necessary per adaptive management principles.

Of the more than 3,200 species known to occur within the Santa Cruz Mountains, the District targets for treatment about 70 priority plant species for natural resource protection and long-term management. These species have the potential to invade natural areas, displace native species, and reduce biodiversity. The State of California considers 20 of these species as noxious weeds.

The District uses contractors most frequently for large infestations and for invasive species that have very specific treatment timing. Currently, there are 23 major sites where the District uses contractors to manage priority species (see Attachment 1: IPM Program Treatment Sites). District staff oversee the work of contractors, including the work of District-approved biologists who monitor worksites when contractors are working near sensitive resource areas such as ponds with rare aquatic species. In total, contractors provide 45% to 55% of the labor force to treat invasive species on District lands (the remainder is covered by volunteers and in-house staff).

DISCUSSION

The District issued a Request for Bids (RFB) on September 1, 2020. Invasive species treatment in natural areas and rangelands (including areas open to the general public) requires distinct knowledge, skills, and abilities. In addition to the legally required licenses, the District requires firms to have the following experience:

- Worked under an independent biological monitor in sensitive or special status species habitat;
- Performed vegetation management in a natural environment;
- Worked on an active rangeland;
- Interacted with the public during IPM activities to keep people safe and informed;
- Proficiency in identifying native, non-native, and invasive plant species of the Santa Cruz Mountains; and
- Applied and supervised the safe use of pesticides.

Contractors that provide vegetation management in natural areas must remain flexible with treatment methods and timing based on field verified environmental conditions. For all bid items, the contractor is compensated for the actual number of hours worked on the preserves treating weeds. Estimates are provided to assist the contractor in projecting typical work. Actual acres, hours, target weeds, cover, and specific locations may vary at time of treatment to respond to actual field conditions. All contractors who bid on this project were informed that the District could modify the number of hours to add or deduct work from the scope of work at the District's discretion in order to remain within the project budget of up to \$275,000 per year.

The RFB was advertised in local newspapers, on the District website, and on BidSync. Staff notified twelve firms known to have experience managing vegetation in natural environments. Four firms attended the mandatory pre-bid tour on September 14, 2020. On September 18, 2020, the District issued an addendum informing all firms that the District was re-advertising the RFB and was adding an additional pre-bid conference. On October 1, 2020, two additional firms participated in the pre-bid conference. An additional addendum was issued on October 13 to clarify requirements and answer questions raised during the bidding process.

The District publicly opened the bids October 16, 2020 at the main administrative office, and it was broadcast live via Microsoft Teams. Two bids were received. One additional bid was received after the bid opening, which was returned to the bidder unopened. Hanford ARC was

announced as the apparent low bidder. The detailed breakdown of the two bids received is as follows:

Bidder	Location	Total Base Bid	Percent +/- from District's Estimate (\$275,000)
Hanford ARC	Petaluma, CA	\$335,604.80	22%
Professional Tree Care	Berkeley, CA	\$390,059	42%

District staff deemed Hanford ARC as the lowest responsible and responsive bidder for the project. Per the RFB, Hanford ARC's bid of \$335,604.80 has been decreased to meet the project budget by reducing the scope of work. The duration of the recommended contract would be for a one-year term at the base bid of \$275,000 with an option for both parties to extend the contract annually up to a total of four years, for a total not-to-exceed amount of \$1,100,000. Success criteria that will be used to determine whether to annually extend the contract include: maintaining less than five percent cover of the target species within the treatment area; adherence to the District's Best Management Practices for protecting and restoring the natural environment; ability to treat target species within the time allotted by District staff for species with highly specific treatment time windows; adherence to safe, judicious, and limited use requirements for chemical treatment; and timely communication of project milestones and/or issues.

FISCAL IMPACT

The award of contract to Hanford ARC spans multiple fiscal years as well as multiple funding sources. There are sufficient funds in the adopted FY21 budget to cover the project costs through the end of the fiscal year. Funding for future years budgets will be requested as part of the annual Budget and Action Plan process.

A funding breakdown for the first year of work is provided below (Nov 2020 – Dec 2021). Note that the 12 months of work spans portions of two fiscal years:

Fund	Project #	FY21 Contract Amount	FY22 Contract Amount	Total
10 – General Operating Fund	80007-10-100280	\$155,250	\$49,750	\$205,000
30 – Measure AA Capital	MAA21-007	\$55,650	\$14,350	\$70,000
TOTAL		\$210,900	\$ 64,100	\$275,000

A portion of the contracted work is funded by Measure AA.

The FY21 adopted budget includes \$133,500 for the Bear Creek Redwoods Preserve Plan: Invasive Weed Treatment and Restoration project MAA21-007. There are sufficient funds in the project budget to cover the recommended action and expenditures. Funding for future years budgets will be requested as part of the annual Budget and Action Plan process.

Bear Creek Redwoods Preserve Plan: Invasive Weed Treatment and Restoration MAA21-007	Prior Year Actuals	FY21 Adopted	FY22 Projected	Estimated Future Years	TOTAL
District Funded (Fund 30):	\$560,600	\$83,500	\$14,350	\$0	\$658,450
Grant Amount:	\$396,924	\$50,000	\$0	\$0	\$446,924
Total Budget:	\$957,524	\$133,500	\$0	\$0	\$1,105,374
Spent-to-Date (as of 10/20/2020):	(\$957,524)	(\$14,301)	\$0	\$0	(\$971,825)
Encumbrances:	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Hanford ARC Contract:	\$0	(\$55,650)	(\$14,350)	\$0	(\$70,000)
Budget Remaining (Proposed):	\$0	\$63,549	\$0	\$0	\$63,549

The following table outlines the Measure AA Portfolio 21 Bear Creek Redwoods: Public Recreation and Interpretative Projects allocation, costs-to-date, projected future project expenditures and projected portfolio balance remaining.

MAA21 Bear Creek Redwoods: Public Recreation and Interpretive Projects Portfolio Allocation:	\$17,478,000
Grant Income (through FY23):	\$3,691,424
Committed General Fund Capital (Fund 40) funds:	\$500,000
Allocation of available MAA interest earnings:	\$1,223,530
Total Portfolio Allocation:	\$22,892,954
Life-to-Date Spent (as of 10/20/2020):	(\$10,114,138)
Encumbrances:	(\$1,213,635)
Remaining FY21 Project Budgets:	(\$1,464,685)
Future MAA21 project costs (projected through FY23):	(\$8,850,320)
Total Portfolio Expenditures:	(\$21,642,778)
Portfolio Balance Remaining (Proposed):	\$1,250,176

The following table outlines the Measure AA Portfolio 21 Bear Creek Redwoods: Public Recreation and Interpretative Projects allocation, projected life of project expenditures and projected portfolio balance remaining.

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Allocation of available MAA interest earnings:	\$1,223,530
Total Portfolio Allocation:	\$22,892,954
Projected Project Expenditures (life of project):	
21-001 Moody Gulch Fence & Gate Improvements	(\$874)
21-002 Bear Creek Redwoods Preserve Plan	\$14,369
21-004 Bear Creek Stables Site Plan Implementation	(\$5,272,587)
21-005 Bear Creek Redwoods Public Access	(\$5,542,970)
21-006 Bear Creek Redwoods Alma College Cleanup and Stabilization	(\$5,790,674)
21-007 Bear Creek Redwoods Preserve Plan Invasive Weed Treatment*	(\$1,105,374)*
21-008 Bear Creek Redwoods Ponds Restoration and Water Rights	(\$681,560)
21-009 Bear Creek Redwoods Webb Creek Bridge	(\$487,492)
21-010 Bear Creek Redwoods Landfill Characterization and Remediation	(\$396,593)
21-011 Phase II Trail Improvements, Bear Creek Redwoods OSP	(\$2,288,108)
21-012 Bear Creek Redwood Tree Restoration	(\$90,915)

Total Portfolio Expenditures:	(\$21,642,778)
Portfolio Balance Remaining (Proposed):	\$1,250,176

**A portion of the recommended contract is funded by Measure AA.*

BOARD COMMITTEE REVIEW

A Board Committee has not previously reviewed this item. Per the IPM Program, an annual report is presented to the full Board of Directors every year that summarizes the past year's work. On August 12, 2020, District staff presented the 2019 Annual IPM Report (R-20-90).

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act. Public notice was sent to interested parties by postal or electronic mail.

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), 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). District staff have incorporated the associated mitigation measures and BMPs from the environmental review documents into the project and the contract documents.

NEXT STEPS

Upon approval by the Board, the General Manager will enter into a one-year contract with Hanford ARC of Petaluma, CA. If the program is successful in the first year, the District may extend the contract annually for a contract duration of up to four years.

Attachment

1. Locations of IPM Program Treatment Sites

Responsible Department Head:

Kirk Lenington, Natural Resources

Prepared by:

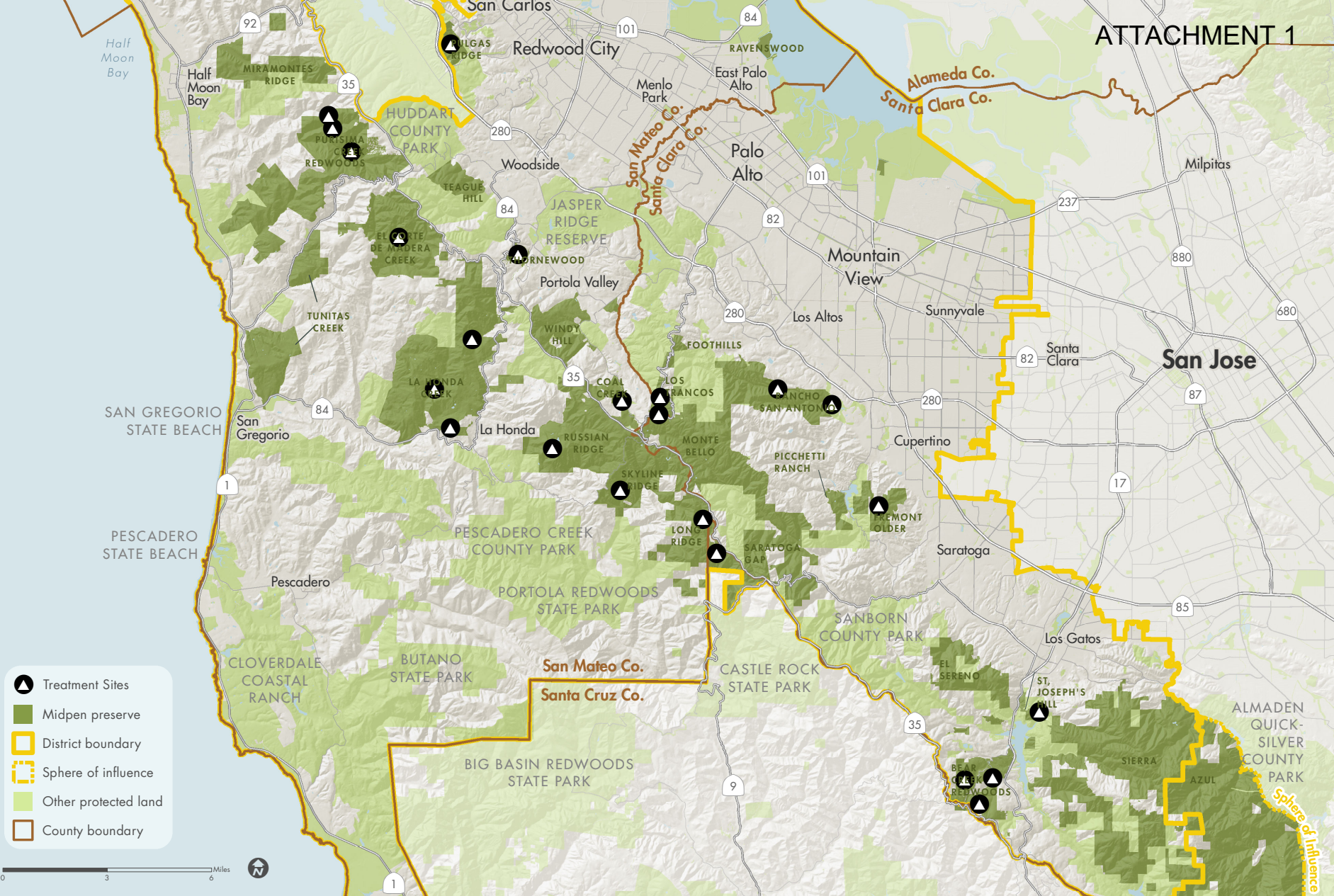
Coty Sifuentes-Winter, Senior Resource Management Specialist, Natural Resources

Contact person:

Tom Reyes, IPM Coordinator, Natural Resources

Graphics prepared by:

Rachel Bu, Data Analyst I



- Treatment Sites
- Midpen preserve
- District boundary
- Sphere of influence
- Other protected land
- County boundary