



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

R-21-27
Meeting 21-06
February 24, 2021

AGENDA ITEM 4

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Minor Amendments to the Grantmaking Program Agreement with The Regents of the University of California on behalf of its Santa Cruz Campus, a Grant Program Awardee from the Fiscal Year 2018-19 Funding Round who is Researching the Pollen Limitation of Key Native Forb Species and the Impact of Pollination Competition from Non-native, Invasive French Broom

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

Authorize a one-year extension and an increase of \$1,836 to the current grant funding agreement with The Regents of the University of California on behalf of its Santa Cruz Campus to provide additional time and funding for project completion to address COVID-19 impacts, bringing the agreement to a new, not-to-exceed total of \$51,211 and extending the grant deadline date by one year to December 12, 2023.

SUMMARY

The Regents of the University of California, on behalf of its Santa Cruz Campus (UCSC) was one of seven grant proposers who were awarded grant funding under the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's (District) Grantmaking Program as part of the Fiscal Year 2018-19 Funding Round. Unfortunately, unexpected operational impacts arising from the COVID-19 pandemic and shelter-in-place orders has resulted in time delays and cost impacts for the research work. UCSC is requesting a grant extension and a minor funding augmentation to fully complete the grant-funded scope of work. The General Manager recommends authorizing minor amendments to the grant agreement to extend the grant deadline by one year and increase the funding amount by \$1,836. The recommended increase would still maintain the Grantmaking Program within the Board-approved amount of \$250,000 over three years.

DISCUSSION

In 2018, the Board of Directors (Board) approved a revised Grantmaking Policy, which set forth a renewed commitment to provide funding under a wide set of funding priorities to external organizations that support the District's mission. The purposes of this program are to a) expand the District's reach by furthering its mission through outside partnerships, b) build and deepen existing relationships with partners, and c) learn from partners.

District staff released the first grant program solicitation under the District's Grantmaking Policy, as approved and revised by the Board, in 2018. A total of \$250,000 was available for the Fiscal Year 2018-19 funding round.

Based on the application evaluation and scoring by the staff-composed Grantmaking Advisory Committee, the General Manager recommended funding seven (7) proposals. Grantees included The Regents of the University of California on behalf of its Santa Cruz Campus, Environmental Volunteers, Groundswell Coastal Ecology, San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory (one Applied Science grant and one Education, Access, and Interpretation grant), Thrive Alliance, and Vida Verde Education Center. The Legislative, Funding, and Public Affairs Committee forwarded these recommended projects to the Board.

On July 24, 2019, the Board approved the recommended grant awards for the Fiscal Year 2018-2019 Grantmaking Program. UCSC was awarded \$49,375 to investigate the extent to which native forbs are pollen limited and whether pollen limitation is exacerbated by the invasion of French broom. The results of UCSC's research would provide important information about the pollen limitation of key native species on District preserves, and an assessment of how pollinator competition is impacted by the presence of non-native French broom. Depending on the findings, this information could inform invasive pest management practices within District preserves.

In spring 2020, COVID-19 restrictions and both District and university policies interrupted UCSC's required fieldwork during the short window of time when both French broom and native forbs are in flower. Prior to the interruption of their work, UCSC incurred a total of \$1,836 in project costs related to site scouting and interviewing, and onboarding and training two undergraduate research technicians. This work will have to be repeated this spring (a year delay), raising a need to recoup the time and costs to ensure project completion and final findings that will contribute to the District's science-based land management work.

FISCAL IMPACT

The additional \$1,836 is projected to be spent in Fiscal Year 2022-23 (FY23). Funds will be recommended in future fiscal year budgets as a part of the annual Budget and Action Plan process. With the addition of \$1,836 awarded to UCSC, the Grantmaking Program remains within the board approved amount of \$250,000 over three years.

BOARD COMMITTEE REVIEW

The Board authorized the General Manager to enter into an agreement with UCSC and other recommended grant awards for the Fiscal Year 2018-2019 Grantmaking Program at the July 24, 2019 regular meeting (R-19-98).

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

This item is not a project subject to the California Environmental Quality Act.

NEXT STEPS

Pending Board approval, the General Manager will authorize UCSC's contract amendment to add additional funding and extend the expiration date.

Attachment(s): None

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