

**COUNTY OF SONOMA
AGENDA ITEM
SUMMARY REPORT**

Clerk of the Board Use Only
Meeting Date **Held Until**

Agenda Item No: **Agenda Item No:**

Department:
 Sonoma County Water Agency

() 4/5 Vote Required

Contact: Brad Sherwood **Phone:** (707) 547-1927 **Board Date:** 04-07-09

Deadline for Board Action:

AGENDA SHORT TITLE:
 Water Conservation and Public Information Survey

REQUESTED BOARD ACTION(S):

1. Authorize Chair to execute the Agreement for Water Conservation and Public Information Survey between the Sonoma County Water Agency (Agency) and EMC Research (\$35,000).
2. Authorize General Manager/Chief Engineer to amend the Agreement provided amendments do not cumulatively increase the total cost to the Agency by more than \$25,000 (taking into account all prior amendments) and do not substantially change the scope of work.

CURRENT FISCAL YEAR FINANCIAL IMPACT

<u>EXPENDITURES</u>		<u>ADD'L FUNDS REQUIRING BOARD APPROVAL</u>	
Estimated Cost	\$ 35,000	Contingencies	\$
Amount Budgeted	\$ 35,000	(Fund Name:)	
Other Avail Approp	\$	Unanticipated Revenue	\$
(Explain below)		(Source:)	
Additional Requested:	\$ _____ -0-	Other Transfer(s)	\$
		(Source:)	
		Add'l Funds Requested:	\$ _____ -0-

Explanation (if required): Funding is available from the \$35,000 appropriation in the FY 2008/2009 budget for the Fund entitled SCWA General Fund – Consulting Services (Account No. 672105-6570).

Prior Board Action(s):

July 2003 and 2007 the Board authorized agreements between the Sonoma County Water Agency and Evans/McDonough Co., Inc. to conduct public opinion surveys.

Alternatives - Results of Non-Approval:

Background: Agreement on file with the Clerk.

In July 2003 and July 2007, the Board authorized agreements between the Sonoma County Water Agency (Agency) and Evans/McDonough Co. Inc., now named EMC Research (EMC), to conduct public opinion research through the development and implementations of phone surveys. The Agency's Public Affairs Department is seeking to implement a similar public opinion survey in order to research current opinions based on the baseline data received in 2003 and 2007 and to guide future public outreach planning efforts. EMC would conduct the survey during the month of April 2009, with reporting and consultation on results available by May 2009.

The survey would be conducted by telephone and consist of six hundred (600) registered voters in the Agency's service area, and would be available in both Spanish and English. The survey would be 18 minutes in length. The survey would measure opinions on a variety of issues including water conservation, sustainability, flood protection and stream maintenance. The Agency's strategic communications plan recommends that the Agency administer a public opinion survey every two years in order to measure the results of its public outreach and education programs. Surveys of this type allow the Agency to measure the success of its public outreach and education programs. Survey results allow the Agency to re-evaluate how each outreach program is developed and implemented. Survey research is important to developing an effective public outreach campaign.

Survey results will help guide the Agency to formulate its annual Public Outreach Water Conservation Campaign and other related public outreach programs. Given the dry year, the survey will provide valuable statistics on public perception and knowledge of current water supply trends, water conservation programs and rebates, and general awareness regarding our water sources. Based on the survey results, the Agency will develop its water conservation message(s) and begin developing and implementing its water conservation campaign. Every year, the Agency, in cooperation with its contractors, develops a water conservation campaign that includes paid and earned media placements in its service area. The campaign focuses on one to three key messages – messages are dependent on survey research.

EMC was chosen to once again develop and implement the public opinion survey because of their knowledge and mastery of performing this type of work. EMC has successfully completed prior surveys for the Agency in a timely and professional manner. The scope of work includes developing and finalizing the survey, conducting the survey and presenting the survey findings with staff and the Board of Directors. Hourly rates and scope of work for this project are consistent for this kind of survey work.

B1
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Attachments:

On File With Clerk: Agreement (4 Copies)

CLERK OF THE BOARD USE ONLY

Board Action (If other than "Requested")

Vote:

Background continued:

A competitive selection process is required for professional services as defined in Government Code 4525-4529. Since the services specified in this agreement do not fall within that requirement, and because the agreement is for only \$35,000 and the survey had to be completed by April, 2009, Agency staff determined that it was not in the public's best interest to expend the time and cost of requesting proposals. EMC was selected based on the experience and skills of its key personnel and reasonable cost.

The Agreement includes provisions for the Agency's General Manager/Chief Engineer to terminate the Agreement.

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B2