

County Of Sonoma Agenda Item Summary Report

Clerk of the Board Use Only
Meeting Date **Held Until**
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Agenda Item No: **Agenda Item No:**
 _____ _____

Department: Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District

4/5 Vote Not Required

Contact:
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Board Date:
10/20/2009

Deadline for Board Action:
10/20/2009

AGENDA SHORT TITLE: Public Outings Program – Agreements for Consultant Services.

REQUESTED BOARD ACTION: Authorize the Interim General Manager of the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District to execute:

- 1) A contract between the District and LandPaths for \$93,450 for public outings on District-protected properties through June 30, 2010; and
- 2) A contract between the District and Sotoyome Resource Conservation District, in partnership with Southern Sonoma County Resource Conservation District, for \$33,531 for public outings on District-protected properties through June 30, 2010; and
- 3) An amendment to the contract between the District and Sonoma Ecology Center to extend the term through June 30, 2010, in an amount not to exceed \$34,246 (an increase of \$20,124) for public outings on District-protected properties.

CURRENT FISCAL YEAR FINANCIAL IMPACT

EXPENDITURES:

ADDITIONAL FUNDS REQUIRING BOARD APPROVAL:

Estimated Cost	\$147,105	Contingencies (Fund Name:)	\$0
Amount Budgeted	\$147,105	Unanticipated Revenue (Source:)	\$0
Other Available Appropriations (Explain Below)	\$0	Other Transfers (Source:)	\$0
Additional Requested	\$0	Additional Funds Requested	\$0

Explanation (if required): None.

Prior Board Action: On July 14, 2009, the District Board approved a contract for LandPaths to conduct public outings on District-protected properties.

Alternatives – Results of Non-Approval: Public access on District-protected lands would not occur for the remainder of FY 09-10.

Background: NOTE: Contracts and Scopes of Work are on file with the Clerk of the Board.

Discussion

Since the inception of the public outings program, the District has partnered with LandPaths and the Sonoma Ecology Center to provide public access to District-preserved lands. The program has been integral in providing community access and building public awareness on the importance of protecting lands for agriculture, greenbelts, natural resources, and recreation. Community participation has dramatically increased since program inception and as the District has acquired additional properties. Waitlists for outings in FY 08-09 were continuous, and currently the demand for access may increase as State Parks continues to face budgetary challenges that may result in partial or seasonal closings of state parks throughout Sonoma County.

These partnerships provide a cost-effective and efficient service that exceeds the capacity and expertise of District staff, and an opportunity to connect Sonoma County residents to District-protected lands and experience the scenic, natural resource, open space, and recreational benefits of land conservation. Additionally, the outings program represents only one aspect of public access provided by the District. Other programs include the education program, interim access programs for Taylor Mountain and Willow Creek, and volunteer programs for District fee lands.

In July, the District solicited a Request for Proposals for potential public access models for its outings program that enhances the outreach goals of the District including:

- 1) Providing access to county residents and visitors to District-protected lands through a public access program that ensures the safety of the participant and the protection of the natural resources on the property;
- 2) Connecting residents and visitors, from all sectors of the community, to the land to develop an appreciation of the conservation of the land and its natural resources; and
- 3) Developing a public access program that provides an enjoyable, safe, and positive experience for people to experience the beauty, appreciate the value, and assist in the stewardship of the protected land in their community.

The District received a 65% response rate, for a total of seven (7) proposals, most of which reflected multiple organizations collectively partnering on a single, comprehensive proposal, rather than submitting separate responses.

Responses that ranked highest in the selection process proposed a diverse approach to public access, the use of a variety of partners, and offerings to a wide demographic including families, and Hispanic and young adult populations. The District is recommending the following providers for its public outings program through June 30, 2010:

- 1) LandPaths, in partnership with the Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation, will provide 31 outings on properties including Wright Hill Ranch, Sonoma, Saddle and Taylor Mountains, Carrington, Doerksen, McCullough, the Petaluma Marsh properties, Laguna and the Laguna Uplands, access points along the Russian River, and on agricultural properties and easements including Crane Farm and Tierra Vegetables. Themes include history, culture, birding, family, recreation, biology and botany.
- 2) Sotoyome Resource Conservation District, in partnership with the Southern Sonoma County Resource Conservation District, will provide six (6) outings that will have a strong educational and technical component that will highlight land stewardship and agricultural practices. Themes include: planning for biological diversity and water quality through sustainable land management practices, grazing management and grassland ecology, working forests and sustainable forest practices, farming and the environmental/regulatory arena, and farm succession planning.
- 3) Sonoma Ecology Center will provide twelve (12) outings on Montini, Calabazas Creek, and Van Hoosier Wildflower Preserve with themes including history, local lore, astronomy, biology, creative writing, and family.

- 4) The Center for Social and Environmental Stewardship, formerly Circuit Rider, will provide 19 outings on properties including Clover Springs, Riverfront Regional Park, Windsor Oaks, and Foothill Regional Park that reflect themes including plant biodiversity and community ecology, native plant photography, and birding. This contract is not reflected in the requested board action as the contract amount is within the Interim General Manager's authority to execute.

The purpose of this item is to authorize the Interim General Manager to execute contracts with LandPaths, and Sotoyome Resource Conservation District, and to execute an amendment to the contract with Sonoma Ecology Center to extend the contract period and amount, to continue this successful and growing public outings program through June 30, 2010. The total cost for the additional outings shall not exceed \$147,105. Funding is available in the District's FY 09-10 budget to cover these costs.

Recommendation

The Interim General Manager recommends that the Board approve and authorize execution of contracts with LandPaths, in an amount not to exceed \$93,450, and with Sotoyome Resource Conservation District, in an amount not to exceed \$33,531, and an amendment to the contract with Sonoma Ecology Center to extend the term through June 30, 2010 in an amount not to exceed \$34,246 (an increase of \$20,124) for public outings on District-protected properties.

Attachments: None.

On File With Clerk: Contracts, including Scopes of Work

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Board Action (If other than "Requested")

Vote: