



STAFF REPORT

Meeting Type: Board of Directors
Title: Award of Environmental Services Contract for Atmospheric River Capture Project (formerly known as PETA-3 Conveyance Project)
From: Paul Sellier, Director of Water Resources
Through: Ben Horenstein, General Manager
Meeting Date: June 3, 2025

TYPE OF ITEM: X Action Information

RECOMMENDATION: Authorize the General Manager to execute a professional services agreement with Panorama Environmental, Inc. for the Atmospheric River Capture (ARC) Project Environmental Compliance and Regulatory Agency Permitting Services Contract in the amount of \$1,051,561 with optional services for \$198,248, for a total not to exceed amount of \$1,249,809

SUMMARY: The Board recently approved on April 15, 2025 an agreement with Carollo Engineers to provide the engineering design services for the Atmospheric River Capture (ARC) Project and in order for the District to advance this project, it is necessary to hire an environmental consultant team that will assist the District in its environmental analysis and review of the proposed project and in developing all environmental documentation in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), as well as assisting the District with required environmental permits. After reviewing the proposals and interviewing consultant teams, staff is recommending award of the contract to Panorama Environmental, Inc. in the amount of \$1,051,561 with optional services for \$198,248, for a total not to exceed amount of \$1,249,809.

DISCUSSION: As part of the District's ongoing Water Supply Roadmap actions, the Atmospheric River Capture Project was identified as the preferred alternative compared to other long-term water supply alternatives available to the District to advance into design and environmental review. On April 15, 2025, the Board approved an agreement with Carollo Engineers to provide the engineering design services for the proposed project. In order to advance the project to construction, the District will need to conduct environmental review and analysis of the project and prepare any needed documentation required pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act and potentially also the National Environmental Policy Act, as well as prepare and submit needed permit applications. To support this effort, the District prepared and circulated a request for proposals (RFP) for Environmental Compliance and Permitting services. The scope encompasses preparation of necessary environmental analysis and compliance, including document preparation (California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)/National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA)), permitting, as well as support for a robust stakeholder and

agency engagement process. The RFP was distributed on March 17, 2025 and proposals from two firms were received on April 16, 2025. Interviews were conducted the week of March 28, 2025. Based on the proposals and interviews, staff selected Panorama Environmental, Inc. (Panorama).

Panorama’s proposal was extremely responsive to requirements in the RFP, and demonstrated awareness in key areas of the proposed project expected to be most challenging. The team emphasized early coordination with local agencies and jurisdictions and planning for uncertainty in project design components to keep the project on schedule and budget. The Panorama team has previously worked with the District on successful EIR preparation and permitting associated with the District’s Biodiversity, Fire and Fuels Integrated Plan (BFFIP) as well as environmental documentation supporting the Ross Reservoir Slide Repair Project. Staff is confident that the Panorama team provides the District the necessary experience, skills and resources to successfully complete the environmental review, analysis, documentation and permitting required for the proposed ARC Project.

Staff recommends the Board of Directors approve a Professional Services Agreement with Panorama Environmental Inc. and authorize the General Manager to negotiate and execute the contract for the Atmospheric River Capture (ARC) Project Environmental Compliance and Regulatory Agency Permitting Services Contract in the amount of \$1,051,561 with optional services for \$198,248, for a total not to exceed amount of \$1,249,809.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW: Not applicable.

FISCAL IMPACT:



The total cost impact associated with the proposed agreement is \$1,249,809 as shown in Table 1. Funds are included in the FY 2026-27 Budget.

**Table 1
Atmospheric River Capture Project - Environmental Documentation and Permitting
Scope of Work and Fee Summary**

Task Description	Budget
Task 1 – Project Management: This task includes conducting project progress meetings, preparing monthly progress reports, preparing and attending Board presentations, internal technical reviews and quality assurance, coordination with sub-consultants	\$127,275
Task 2A—CEQA: This task includes preparation of project description; conducting biological and cultural investigations; performing traffic, transportation, noise, air quality, GHG , hazardous materials assessments to support Environmental Impact Report (EIR); visual simulation of proposed facilities; development of Notice of Preparation (NOP), and scoping; development of EIR including admin draft, internal review, screen check, public review draft EIR, response to comments received during public review of draft EIR, and finalizing EIR	\$738,180
Task 2B—NEPA: This task includes coordination with Federal agencies, initiation of NEPA, development of draft Environmental Assessment and associated permits, as identified, provide Section 7 and Section 106 Consultation Support to the District	\$107,526

Task 3—Permitting and Stakeholder Coordination: This task includes preparation and submittal of required agency permits, providing support to the District for stakeholder concerns regarding the project, and assistance with public outreach as needed – including preparation of a project outreach plan, development of project materials, planning and preparation of public workshops to support the project	\$78,580
TOTAL	\$1,051,561
Optional Tasks: This task includes additional biological and cultural surveys that may be necessary to assess pump station(s), archaeological monitoring, additional traffic analysis, landscape design support services and additional project management support and coordination to support the project.	\$198,248
TOTAL WITH OPTIONAL TASKS	\$1,249,809

ATTACHMENT(S): None.

DEPARTMENT OR DIVISION	DIVISION MANAGER	APPROVED
Water Resources	 Paul Sellier Water Resources Director	 Ben Horenstein General Manager