



STAFF REPORT

Meeting Type: Watershed Committee/Board of Directors
Title: 2024-2027 Forestry Services Contract
From: Shaun Horne, Director of Watershed Resources
Through: Ben Horenstein, General Manager
Meeting Date: September 19, 2024

TYPE OF ACTION: Action Information X Review and Refer

RECOMMENDATION: Review and refer the proposed Forestry Services General Services Agreement (GSA) contract to a future regular meeting of the Board of Directors for award of the contract to the lowest qualified bidder

SUMMARY: The District is currently in year six of implementation of the Biodiversity, Fire and Fuels Integrated Plan (BFFIP) that was adopted in 2019. The current contract with Hanford ARC expired on June 30, 2024. Staff propose using a three year 'Forestry Services' contract to provide labor and equipment necessary to further implement treatments outline in the 2019 BFFIP vegetation Management Actions. Assuming satisfactory contractor performance during the initial three-year term, the GSA contract allows the District the option to execute two subsequent one-year contract extensions.

Staff is requesting that the Watershed Committee review and refer the Forestry Services GSA contract for approval at a future regularly scheduled Board of Directors meeting for award of contract to the lowest qualified bidder, and to authorize the General Manager to execute any and all future amendments to this contract, which is deemed necessary, so long as they do not exceed 10% in total of the contract amount.

DISCUSSION: In October of 2019, the District adopted the BFFIP, and associated Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR), which describes the actions the District will implement to reduce wildfire hazards and to maintain and enhance ecosystem function. Vegetation management under the BFFIP aims to reduce fuel loads, maintain fuelbreak infrastructure, preserve defensible space, and reduce invasive weed species. Vegetation management is conducted continuously throughout the year with the chief goal of reducing fuel loads and maintaining the watershed's biological diversity.

Over the last four years, Hanford ARC has successfully assisted the District under contract CN1938 with implementation of BFFIP vegetation Management Actions. On June 30, 2024 CN1938 expired and the District is now seeking bids for a new forestry contract in order to continue critical BFFIP implementation. For the past five years, Watershed Staff and contractors have successfully implemented vegetation Management Actions (MA) outlined within the BFFIP. Implementation of management actions requires multiple contractors with a range of technical skills to conduct over 1,500 acres of annual vegetation treatments described in the BFFIP under MA-20, 'Fuelbreak Construction', MA-21 'Fuelbreak Construction', MA-23, 'Forest Stand Structure Improvement' and MA 24, 'Grassland and Oak Woodland Improvement'. This new Forestry GSA will provide skilled hand and operator labor, as well as heavy equipment masticators necessary to continue planned BFFIP Management Actions. In addition, this new Forestry GSA will also support maintenance of the Lagunitas Creek Watershed Enhancement Project that is currently being constructed.



Proposal Selection Process:

On August 23, 2024, the District released a notice inviting bids for a three-year Forestry Services GSA contract. The notice was published in the local newspaper and posted on the District's external bid posting website to inform contractors of the opportunity. Sealed bids will be received and reviewed by the District and the lowest qualified bidder will be selected.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW: The District as the Lead Agency, has prepared a Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) pursuant to the provisions of CEQA for the Biodiversity, Fire and Fuels Integrated Plan (BFFIP) which was adopted in 2019 and covers all work being proposed under this 'Forestry Services' GSA contract.

FISCAL IMPACT: Staff estimate the costs to perform the Forestry Services over the initial three years, during FY25, FY26 & FY27, will be \$3,600,000. Funds for this contract will be paid out of a combination of District BFFIP Operations and Capital funding, as well as with a secured Wildlife Conservation Board Grant and Cal Fire Forest Health Grants.

ATTACHMENT(S): None.

DEPARTMENT OR DIVISION	DIVISION MANAGER	APPROVED
Watershed		
	<p align="center">Shaun Horne Watershed Resources Director</p>	<p align="center">Ben Horenstein General Manager</p>