



STAFF REPORT

Meeting Type: Board of Directors
Title: Early Detection Rapid Response Contract
From: Shaun Horne, Director of Watershed Resources
Through: Ben Horenstein, General Manager
Meeting Date: January 20, 2026

TYPE OF ITEM: X Action Information

RECOMMENDATION: Approve a professional Services Agreement with PCI Ecological to conduct Early Detection Rapid Response work along 80 miles of fire roads over a two-year period in an amount not to exceed \$195,439 and authorize the General Manager to execute the agreement

SUMMARY: The District conducts vegetation management work on watershed lands throughout the year under the Biodiversity, Fire, and Fuels Integrated Plan (BFFIP), which was adopted in October of 2019. Vegetation management under the BFFIP aims to reduce fuel loads, maintain fuelbreak infrastructure, preserve defensible space, and reduce invasive weed species. Invasive species, such as French Broom, once established, can degrade natural areas and be costly to manage. The most effective and efficient way to avoid this problem is to locate and treat introduced species while the infestation is small. This is accomplished through regular surveillance of the places where introductions are most likely to occur by practitioners trained in recognition and treatment of problematic species.

In 2016, the District, along with our partners in the One Tam collaborative, started an Early Detection Rapid Response (EDRR) program with the aim of surveying all roads and trails within the District's network over a 3-year cycle. This program has been effective locating and removing many infestations at the early stage. The Golden Gate Parks Conservancy previously implemented this program, but going forward will only have the capacity to conduct EDRR on the District's Mt. Tamalpais Watershed trails network. This contract proposes to fill the gap by providing EDRR work on the District's fire road system by a qualified consultant.

DISCUSSION: The District released a Request for Proposals in November 2025. After reviewing proposals from three qualified firms, staff selected the consulting firm PCI Ecological (Prunuske Chatham Inc.) to conduct EDRR on 80 miles of District fire roads over the course of 2026 and 2027. The firm will conduct an early season and a late season pass each year to ensure that plants with different timing will be found. They will document their findings in the District's group of the Calflora database and will remove all small infestations found. The District will work with the Golden Gate Parks Conservancy to select which roads will be surveyed each year. At the December 18, 2025 Watershed



Committee Meeting, staff presented the BFFIP Annual Report for the sixth year of implementation. As part of the BFFIP Annual Report staff highlighted the 20 miles of EDDR work completed in 2025 and the need for a consultant contract to support EDDR work on the watershed. The proposed scope of work will also include tasks the District approved as part of the E-Bike Pilot Program.

As part of the E-Bike Pilot program initiated in July of 2025, the District committed to conducting EDDR and sharing findings with the public periodically. The District completed EDDR work along 20 miles of fire roads in 2025. To conduct the EDDR work on 80 miles of fire roads over the course of 2026 and 2027 the total cost will be \$195,439. The District and PCI staff will prepare an annual summary report and present findings at public meetings to support the E-Bike pilot program reporting goals and BFFIP Annual Report.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW: The District as the Lead Agency, 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. The EDDR work is within the scope of the BFFIP EIR and is specifically called for in BFFIP Management Action 22.

FISCAL IMPACT: For Fiscal Year 2026 and 2027 the District budgeted BFFIP implementation costs in the Capital Program AE107 and from Operation Budgets 2044 and 2045. The total not to exceed contract amount is \$195,439 for a two-year period.

ATTACHMENT(S): None.

DEPARTMENT OR DIVISION	DIVISION MANAGER	APPROVED
Watershed	 Shaun Horne Watershed Resources Director	 Ben Horenstein General Manager