



Agenda Date: 12/11/2007
Agenda Placement: 6B

NAPA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS Board Agenda Letter

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Hillary Gitelman - Director
Conservation, Development & Planning

REPORT BY: Jeff Sharp, Principal Planner , 259-5936

SUBJECT: Authorization of Agreement granting CalFed Watershed Program funds to Napa County to develop and implement pilot watershed health indicators for the Napa River basin

RECOMMENDATION

Director of Conservation, Development and Planning requests approval of and authorization for the Chair to sign an agreement with the California Department of Water Resources to grant a maximum of \$394,000 in CalFed Watershed Program funds to support the development and analysis of watershed monitoring indicators for the Napa River watershed in conjunction with a larger regional effort across the North Bay/Delta area via partnerships with the University of California at Davis, Napa County Resource Conservation District, the Sonoma Ecology Center and others.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On March 16, 2007, the Director of Conservation, Development and Planning submitted a non-binding "concept" proposal to the CalFed Watershed Program to assist the Watershed Information Center and Conservancy (WICC) Board with the development of a long-term county-wide watershed monitoring program, a priority action item identified in the WICC's Strategic Plan. The conceptual proposal was for a maximum of \$394,000 for the term of January 1, 2008 through June 30, 2010. Tasks outlined in the grant would support the development and analysis of pilot set of watershed monitoring indicators for the Napa River watershed in conjunction with a larger regional effort underway across the greater North Bay/Delta.

On May 1, 2007 the Department received notification of approval to advance to the "full" proposal phase of the grant review process. Eligibility requirements of a full proposal application required a resolution by the Board affirming the County's intent to conduct the proposed project pursuant to all grant conditions, and appointment of a grant contact person designated by title. The Board approved a resolution on May 22, 2007, affirming the Board's intent and designated Patrick Lowe, Deputy Director of the Conservation Division as the grant contact.

A "full" grant proposal with the supporting resolution was submitted to the California Department of Water Resources on June 1, 2007. Notification of award was received on August 6, 2007. The Department received a draft funding Agreement from the State on November 7, 2007.

The Director of Conservation, Development and Planning is now requesting approval of and authorization for the Chair to sign the Agreement with the California Department of Water Resources, allowing the County to receive the awarded funding and commence project activities that will be paid for under the terms and conditions of the grant.

The goals and milestones in the grant proposal are aligned with the mission of the WICC and support the monitoring objectives outlined in the WICC's Watershed Monitoring Strategy; which are to characterize watershed conditions and trends using appropriate indicators and to track the success of natural resource protection and restoration efforts, and evaluate the long-term health of Napa County's watershed lands.

FISCAL IMPACT

Is there a Fiscal Impact?	Yes
Is it currently budgeted?	Yes
Where is it budgeted?	Watershed Information Center and Conservancy (29400) - funding received from the grant will support consultant contracts and provide for CDPD watershed program needs and related staffing costs associated with the grant's administration. The grant will add \$394,000 to Watershed Information Center and Conservancy budget; \$310,500 of which will be used for consultant contracts and \$83,500 to offset staffing and administration costs. The grant also utilizes \$90,410 in-kind match. \$20,000 of the in-kind match will come from the Napa County Resource Conservation District and the balance of \$70,410 will be provided by the County and is already a part of the Watershed Information Center and Conservancy's (WICC's) function and
Is it Mandatory or Discretionary?	Discretionary
Discretionary Justification:	Approval of the grant Agreement is required in order to contract with the California Department of Water Resources and receive State funding under the CalFed Watershed Program. Grant funds received through the Agreement will be used to complete the grant's work program, including the hiring of a number of sub-consultants to complete various grant tasks and to offset County staffing costs associated with sub-consultant coordination and management, as well as grant administration and reporting requirements.
Is the general fund affected?	Yes
Future fiscal impact:	The term of the grant agreement is through June 30, 2010. Grant funds will be received from the State on a periodic basis based upon regular invoicing on the part of the County. Funds received will be use to pay for sub-contracts and staff time on grant work conducted through June 30, 2010. Continued funding for the WICC program is expected to coincide with the term of the grant.
Consequences if not approved:	Funding from the State would not be awarded to support the proposed work plan and the WICC's Watershed Monitoring Strategy will be unattainable at this time, which would impact the county's ability to evaluate the long-term health of Napa County's watershed lands.
Additional Information:	

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Categorical Exemption Class 6: It has been determined that this type of project does not have a significant effect on the environment and is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act. The project will not impact an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern, has no cumulative impact, there is no reasonable possibility that the activity may have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances, will not result in damage to scenic resources, is not located on a list of hazardous waste sites, cause substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource or extract groundwater in excess of the Phase 1 groundwater extraction standards as set by the Department of Public Works. [See Class 6 ("Information Collection") which may be found in the guidelines for the implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act at 14 CCR §15306.]

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

On March 16, 2007, the Director of Conservation, Development and Planning submitted a non-binding "concept" proposal to the CalFed Watershed Program to assist the Watershed Information Center and Conservancy (WICC) Board with the development of a long-term county-wide watershed monitoring program, a priority action item identified in the WICC's Strategic Plan. The conceptual proposal was for a maximum of \$394,000 for the term of January 1, 2008 through June 30, 2010. Tasks outlined in the grant would support the development and analysis of pilot watershed monitoring indicators for the Napa River watershed in conjunction with a larger regional effort underway across the greater North Bay/Delta.

On May 1, 2007 the Department received notification of approval to advance to the "full" proposal phase of the grant review process. Eligibility requirements of a full proposal application required a resolution by the Board affirming the County's intent to conduct the proposed project pursuant to all grant conditions, and appointment of a grant contact person designated by title. The Board approved a resolution on May 22, 2007, affirming the Board's intent and designated the Deputy Director of the Conservation Division as the grant contact.

A "full" grant proposal with the supporting resolution was submitted to the California Department of Water Resources on June 1, 2007. Notification of award was received on August 6, 2007. Based upon the award announcement, the Board, on September 11, 2007, adjusted the Watershed Information Center and Conservancy budget (29400) to reflect \$394,000 in additional revenue (Water Resources) and an equal amount in expected expenses (State Water Resources Grant). The Department received a draft funding Agreement from the State on November 7, 2007. After consultation with both the State and our County Counsel, the Department is now requesting approval of and authorization for the Chair to sign the Agreement with the California Department of Water Resources, allowing the County to receive the awarded funding and commence project activities paid for under the terms and conditions of the grant.

The proposed "Watershed Assessment Framework: North-Bay and Delta Scoping and Napa River Pilot Project" is a coordinated effort to develop performance measures and indicators for "watershed health." It will apply a watershed assessment framework (WAF), which is a means of evaluating/reporting on ecosystem services and socio-economic benefits/conditions in the Napa River watershed and across the Bay-Delta region. The Napa River watershed will serve as a pilot and will be the focus of the data analysis phase of the project. The information from this pilot application will provide Napa County with key watershed indicators and a framework by which to gauge and report the effectiveness of local restoration and watershed enhancement activities intended to improve water quality and meet state and local watershed goals (i.e., TMDL implementation and reporting requirements). Outcomes of the Napa River pilot application can then be used to provide information for a broader application of the WAF throughout the North-Bay and Delta region.

Partners on the project include: The University of California, Davis; Napa County Resource Conservation District;

Sonoma Ecology Center; U.S. Geological Survey; and the Calaveras County Water District (representing stakeholders in the Delta Mokelumne and Calaveras watersheds). The project will provide important information to all stakeholders about appropriate ways to measure watershed conditions and the effectiveness of actions taken to improve water quality and meet local and regional watershed goals and objectives. The project's milestones, work tasks and budget outline are attached for additional information. The project's in-kind match is shared among the project's contributing partners and little if any cash match will be required, and both are already a part of the Watershed Information Center and Conservancy's (WICC's) function and budget.

The project will be coordinated with a statewide effort involving other related projects in the region and across California. Based on a science-based process to develop a local and regional watershed indicator database, stakeholders from existing forums will be invited to join regional technical advisory committees and public forums to discuss the selected monitoring indicators. The Watershed Information Center and Conservancy (WICC) Board, the WICC's Technical Advisory Committee, the North Bay Watershed Network, as well as other targeted public forums will be used to gain stakeholder input into indicator selection and use. Although focus for the pilot application will be in the Napa River watershed, a limited set of critical regional indicators will also be developed. The proposed indicators will be reviewed by experts, including the CalFed Science Program, prior to analysis to address questions such as: 1) Is there an appropriate suite of watershed parameters and associated indicators? 2) Are selected watershed indicators linked to important ecosystem processes and beneficial uses? 3) How does one make/measure connections between management actions and watershed effects?

A critical aspect of the project is providing a science-based, yet understandable, depiction of conditions, influences, and changes in the Napa River watershed. For this reason, the project will develop a reporting system for the Napa River that will overtime 1) analyze conditions in the watershed relative to standards, references, and goals, 2) record change in condition over time, and 3) track differences among tributaries. In the long run, project reporting will inform local and regional adaptive management to systematically improve management policies and practices by learning from recorded outcomes. The pilot effort will also improve future development of watershed and ecosystem indicators by CALFED, the Department of Water Resources, and other state and local agencies tasked to improve watershed monitoring and other watershed management programs, particularly those programs that affect the management of the North-Bay and Delta, from which Napa County receives water.

Obtaining adequate funding through grants and other means in support of WICC's charge and mission is priority action item identified in the WICC's Strategic Plan. Work in preparing the grant application and upfront coordination of partnerships described in the grant is currently funded though under WICC program. The Director of Conservation, Development and Planning is now requesting approval of and authorization for the Chair to sign the Agreement with the California Department of Water Resources, allowing the County to receive the awarded funding and commence project activities that will be paid for under the terms and conditions of the grant.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

A . Project Milestones Tasks and Budget

CEO Recommendation: Approve

Reviewed By: Helene Franchi