



Agenda Date: 6/28/2005
Agenda Placement: 6GG

NAPA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS Board Agenda Letter

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Michael Stoltz for Robert Peterson - Director
Public Works
REPORT BY: Kim Henderson, Staff Services Manager, 259-8382
SUBJECT: Out of State Travel

RECOMMENDATION

Director of Public Works requests authorization for out of state travel for Diane Dillon, Supervisor District Three, for purposes of advocating for federal funding for water reclamation projects in sanitation districts bordering the San Pablo Bay and to appear and possibly testify in support of HR 233/S 128 - the Northern California Coastal Wild Heritage Wilderness Act in Washington, D.C., from July 10 - July 16, 2005, at no cost to the County.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Approval of this item authorizes out of state travel to Washington, D.C. for Supervisor Diane Dillon for the primary purpose of advocating for federal funding for water reclamation projects in sanitation districts bordering the San Pablo Bay including the Milliken/Sarco/Tulocay groundwater deficient area and the Carneros area. The Sonoma County Water Agency, which is the largest participant in the North Bay Water Reuse Program will fund Supervisor Dillon's travel expenses.

At the same time Supervisor Dillon will testify in support of HR 233/S 128, the Northern California Coastal Wild Heritage Wilderness Act. On January 4, 2005, Representative Mike Thompson and Senators Barbara Boxer and Diane Feinstein introduced HR 233/S 128, the Northern California Coastal Wild Heritage Wilderness Act, to protect many pristine and remote stretches of federally owned land in Humboldt, Lake, Mendocino, Napa and Yolo counties. The bill designates 300,000 acres of public land as wilderness areas and identifies certain segments of the Black Butte River as a wild and scenic river. In addition to being cosponsored by Congressman Thompson and Senators Feinstein and Boxer, HR 233/S 128 is supported by Governor Schwarzenegger. On March 1, 2005 the Board unanimously expressed its support of HR 233/S 128.

FISCAL IMPACT

Is there a Fiscal Impact? No

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION: The proposed action is not a project as defined by 14 California Code of Regulations 15378 (State CEQA Guidelines) and therefore CEQA is not applicable.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

The North Bay Water Reuse Program is intended to be coordinated with the Napa River Marsh Restoration Project recycled water pipeline and could benefit the Milliken-Sarco-Tulocay groundwater deficient area and the Carneros area. The project is expected to provide important benefits for the San Pablo Bay watershed. First, the project would provide a reliable water source for agricultural use in a region where groundwater and surface water resources are limited, and consequently is expected to help prevent groundwater overdraft and increase natural runoff with benefits for wildlife and endangered species. Second, the use of high-quality recycled water is expected to enable the participating sanitation districts to greatly reduce discharges into natural streams and waterways and help these districts comply with increasingly stringent discharge requirements.

On August 31, 2004 the Board took action to support for HR 1501/S 738, which was sponsored by Congressman Mike Thompson and Senator Barbara Boxer during the 108th session of Congress. S 738 passed the Senate by unanimous consent in December, 2004, but Congress recessed before HR 1501 was considered by the House of Representatives.

HR 233/S 128, which was introduced at the beginning of the 109th session of Congress, is a successor bill to HR 1501/S 738, and contains essentially the same provisions and, with one exception, the same wilderness area designations as the previous bill. However, the Blue Ridge Trail located on 650 acres in Napa County, which was identified in HR 1501/S 738 as a proposed wilderness area, has been removed from HR 233/S 128 at the request of the Bureau of Land Management as being too small a parcel to administer as a wilderness area. Otherwise, HR 233/S 128, which has the support of the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Forestry Service, and Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, is materially the same as HR 1501/S 738.

Of special note for Napa County is Cedar Roughs, a 6,350 acre parcel that HR 233/S 128 designates as a wilderness area. Cedar Roughs shelters the largest grove in the world of the rare Sargent Cypress and is home to the last wild black bear population in Napa County.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

None

CEO Recommendation: Approve

Reviewed By: Andrew Carey