



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

FROM:  Joseph T. Edmiston, FAICP, Hon. ASLA, Executive Officer

DATE: October 7, 2015

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item XXII: Consideration of resolution authorizing a sole source contract with Hutchinson Engineering, Inc. for habitat mitigation project grading, Agua Dulce Creek, unincorporated Los Angeles County.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing a sole source contract with Hutchinson Engineering, Inc. for habitat mitigation project grading, Agua Dulce Creek.

The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) has been working on permitting for the restoration of a section of Agua Dulce Creek for over two years. The subject section is immediately south of State Route 14. When the freeway was constructed in the 1960s, the creek and its freeway culvert were moved over one hundred feet westward. A large flat pad of fill was graded next to the realigned channel. The result was a dysfunctional down cut slot channel that has remained and been subsequently altered for approximately 50 years. That slot channel has down cut through approximately 20 feet of the fill to join Escondido Creek.

On September 29, 2015 the Army Corps of Engineers staff informed staff that all issues had been resolved and that the restoration project could proceed. The final hold up derived from a mix up between the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the Army Corps of Engineers. Somehow SHPO had construed that an old temporary erosion control device from the freeway grading stream redirection was a potential historic structure. Unfortunately that device was at the upstream origin of the proposed grading work. Staff was facing having to adjust the grading plans to allow the structure to remain in place. That change would have affected project bids and hydrological function of the new stream channel. That turned out not to be the case, but significant time was lost.

The proposed grading work is estimated to take between 3-4 weeks including initially building an equipment access road down to the site. The Los Angeles

County bridge that provided prior access burned beyond repair approximately four years ago. Staff had planned to complete the grading prior to mid-October to avoid significant rainfall events. That schedule is no longer possible and time is of the essence.

To address this predicament, staff is requesting authorization for a sole source contract in an amount not to exceed \$65,000 with a grading contractor that has provided cost effective and responsive work on prior stream restoration projects. That contractor has provided time and materials rate sheets that are standard or less than standard in the industry. Much of the above cost is factored to be for debris removal and dump fees.

Most stream restoration grading work done by the MRCA to date involves the endless removal of historic fill and extensive concrete debris from former flood plain areas. The work is generally one continuous linear unknown. For this reason, staff has to date let time and materials contracts to simultaneously protect the contractor and provide staff with the flexibility to adjust the plans on the spot. Every few hours, the jobs require decisions whether to stay exactly per plan and plow through deep depths of concrete debris or how and when to skirt around such costly minefields. Daily decisions are made to address potential budget liabilities depending on what is buried in the fill areas. The cost of handling and disposing of the concrete, asphalt, and iron re-bar can actual equal daily grading costs. Hutchinson Engineering, Inc. has shown exceptional ability to work under these conditions and to arrange for loading and legal disposal of the material. Likewise their operators have shown a strong ability to work on the spot with MRCA staff to innovate grading responses to steer around expensive trouble or take advantage of areas with less debris resistance. The contractor's prior experience working with the MRCA restoration staff has also demonstrated their strong ability to recognize and avoid sensitive resources.

The subject restoration project has a tight budget that is wholly dependent on adequate grading work in one single stage effort to succeed. Permit conditions require a work stoppage during and after rain events. In summary the wet season time parameters and the tight budget warrant a sole source contract to prevent a 7-8 month delay with the project. The subject contractor has shown the capacity and expertise to execute the subject work within these parameters and assured staff of their availability.