



# MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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## MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

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

DATE: May 2, 2018

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item VI(b): Consideration of resolution authorizing a contract with Aspen Environmental Group for environmental planning services for the Cameron Nature Preserve at Puerco Canyon, unincorporated Los Angeles County.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing a contract with Aspen Environmental Group for environmental planning services for the Cameron Nature Preserve at Puerco Canyon, unincorporated Los Angeles County in an amount not to exceed \$165,855.

Background: The Cameron Nature Preserve at Puerco Canyon was acquired in 2014 and spans 703-acres of openspace in the Santa Monica Mountains. Portions of the property were previously cleared and graded for agricultural uses and residential development prior to the adoption of the California Coastal Act. MRCA is currently researching options for public access improvements for the property. At this time it is necessary to begin studying potential environmental impacts of the proposed improvements, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act. It is expected that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) document will be prepared for the project.

Section 3.3 of the MRCA's Purchasing and Contracting Procedures state that for professional services contracts:

The Purchasing Agent shall determine demonstrated competence and qualifications of the services at fair and reasonable prices by reviewing the following documents to be submitted by the professional: 1) a list of the names and contact information for clients for which services were performed in the last five years; 2) samples of the services performed including the scope and cost; 3) a disclosure of any actions taken against the professional; and, 4) a statement of change order(s) to plans or specifications or projects for which services were provided and the reason for the change order(s).

In accordance with the Outreach and Advertising Policy, staff solicited proposals from five firms known to be certified Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE), and two firms who commonly partner with certified DBE sub-consultants. Four proposals were received. Based on a review of the information submitted, including fees in relationship to services provided, staff recommends contracting with Aspen Environmental Group (Aspen) for environmental services for the project. The contract scope includes the preparation of technical studies, the initial study, the EIR, public noticing, advertising, printing, and a facilitation of one public meeting. Aspen is certified as a Small Business Enterprise.

Aspen has strong experience with the County of Los Angeles' Local Coastal Program (LCP) for the Santa Monica Mountains, the planning document that will govern any development at the site. In addition to CEQA analysis sections, the services will also include analysis of consistency with the LCP. The fee proposals ranged from approximately \$118,000 to \$182,000. Aspen was the second lowest proposal submitted (\$150,778). Staff has determined that their experience with the County's LCP will provide the best value to MRCA for this project.

Consideration: The proposed action would authorize a professional services contract to Aspen in an amount not to exceed \$165,855. Aspen submitted a proposal for the amount of \$150,778 for the complete preparation, review, and execution of an Environmental Impact Report for the project. Staff recommends that the Board approve 10% more than the proposal amount to allow for contingencies and additional required services that are not known at this time.

Fiscal Impacts: The contract will be funded through an existing grant for the project and will have no impact on the general fund. This expense was anticipated in both the fiscal year 17/18 budget and the project budget. The majority of the contract is expected to be completed during fiscal year 18/19, but extended review periods may extend the process into future years.