



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 8/17/2021

File #: 21-1135

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Public Works

Agenda Section: Consent

SUBJECT:

Joint Funding Agreement with United States Department of the Interior - United States Geological Survey Regarding the Provision of Technical Assistance Related to the Development of the Eel River Valley Groundwater Sustainability Plan

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Approve, and authorize the Public Works Director, or a designee thereof, to execute, the attached joint funding agreement with the United States Department of the Interior - United States Geological Survey regarding the provision of technical assistance related to the development of the Eel River Valley Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the period of Jan. 2, 2021, through Jan. 31, 2022;
2. Authorize the Public Works Director, or a designee thereof, to execute any and all subsequent amendments to the attached joint funding agreement with the United States Department of the Interior - United States Geological Survey, after review and approval by County Counsel, Risk Management, and the County Administrative Office; and
3. Direct the Clerk of the Board to provide the Department of Public Works - Environmental Services with one (1) certified copy of the Board Order regarding the attached joint funding agreement with the United States Department of the Interior - United States Geological Survey.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

General Fund (1100); California Department of Water Resources

DISCUSSION:

On Nov. 12, 2019, the Board of Supervisors adopted Resolution No. 19-111 which authorized the Humboldt County Department of Public Works to execute a grant agreement with the California Department of Water Resources (“DWR”) for funding to develop a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (“GSP”) for the Eel River Valley groundwater basin in accordance with the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act. The grant agreement for this project was executed on May 14, 2020. The GSP must be submitted to DWR in January 2022. Additional information regarding the GSP is available online

at: <https://humboldt.gov/2817/Eel-River-Valley-Groundwater-Basin-Home>.

The grant agreement for this project includes funding for the United States Department of the Interior - United States Geological Survey (“USGS”) to provide technical assistance. USGS is a federal scientific research agency that recently completed an assessment of water availability in the Eel River Valley groundwater basin as part of the Regional Groundwater Availability Study of the California Coastal Basins. This assessment was specifically designed to support local agencies comply with the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act.

The attached joint funding agreement will allow USGS to provide technical assistance with hydrologic modeling and development of the hydrogeologic conceptual model and water budget in the GSP for the period of Jan. 2, 2021, through Jan. 31, 2022. USGS will make their data and work products readily available, participate in meetings and review draft documents. Collaboration with USGS will avoid duplicative work, maximize the value of the grant funds for the project and enable the project to benefit from USGS’ technical expertise and perspective working along the entire California coast. It should be noted that the attached joint funding agreement with USGS comes to the Board after the start date thereof due to inadvertent delays that occurred during the contract development process.

Accordingly, the Humboldt County Department of Public Works - Environmental Services recommends that the Board approve, and authorize the Public Works Director, or a designee thereof, to execute the attached joint funding agreement with USGS regarding the provision of technical assistance related to the development of a GSP for the Eel River Valley groundwater basin for the period of Jan. 2, 2021, through Jan. 31, 2022. It is also recommended that the Board authorize the Public Works Director, or a designee thereof, to execute any and all subsequent amendments to the attached joint funding agreement with USGS, after review and approval by County Counsel, Risk Management, and the County Administrative Office, in order to avoid any unnecessary delays in the provision of needed technical assistance.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The attached joint funding agreement with USGS has a maximum cost of Ninety-Nine Thousand Dollars (\$99,000) for the period of Jan. 2, 2021, through Jan. 31, 2022. The County of Humboldt will be responsible for contributing up to Eighty Thousand Dollars (\$80,000) and USGS would contribute up to Nineteen Thousand Dollars (\$19,000). USGS will charge for actual costs incurred pursuant to the terms and conditions of the attached joint funding agreement. Funding provided by the County of Humboldt under the attached joint funding agreement with USGS will be reimbursable through the grant agreement with DWR. Expenditure appropriations related to the grant agreement with DWR have been included in the approved fiscal year 2021-22 budget at revenue line 1100251-800600. As a result, approval of the attached joint funding agreement will not impact the Humboldt County General Fund.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:

The recommended actions support the Board of Supervisors’ Strategic Framework by providing community-appropriate levels of service and building interjurisdictional and regional cooperation.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

California Department of Water Resources

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Board of Supervisors may choose not to approve the attached joint funding agreement with USGS regarding the provision of technical assistance related to the development of a GSP for the Eel River Valley groundwater basin. However, this alternative is not recommended as it would reduce the likelihood of, and increase the cost associated with, completing the GSP.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Joint Funding Agreement with United States Department of the Interior - United States Geological Survey Regarding the Provision of Technical Assistance Related to Development of the Eel River Valley Groundwater Sustainability Plan

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No.: C-12

Meeting of: Nov. 12, 2019

File No.: 19-1635