



MEMORANDUM
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING DIVISION
County of Placer

TO: Board of Supervisors DATE: September 10, 2019
FROM: Ken Grehm, Director of Public Works
By: Brett Storey, Principal Management Analyst
SUBJECT: Environmental Engineering / Consulting Services Agreement / Mason Bruce & Girard, Inc. / French Meadows Forest Restoration Project

ACTION REQUESTED

Approve a Consulting Services Agreement with Mason Bruce & Girard, Inc. to complete pre-project layout markings for the French Meadows Forest Restoration Project and the Roadside Hazard Removal Project in the amount of \$226,420 and authorize the Director of Public Works, or designee, to execute the Consulting Agreement and any change orders up to 10 percent of the Consulting Agreement amount.

BACKGROUND

On February 20, 2018, your Board approved a Master Stewardship Agreement (MSA) with the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) Tahoe National Forest (TNF). The MSA was developed to facilitate projects that support forest health and potentially lower the risk of catastrophic fire in the Tahoe National Forest watersheds, primarily in the American River and Truckee River Watershed ecosystems.

On June 26, 2018, your Board approved a Supplemental Project Agreement (SPA) to the MSA with the USFS TNF for \$1,915,000 that includes \$1,715,000 for the French Meadows Forest Restoration Project (FM Project) and \$200,000 for the Roadside Hazard Removal Project (HR Project). The FM Project includes mechanical forest thinning operations, removal of material for biomass, reforestation, meadow restoration, and targeted prescribed burns all in a 22,000 acre region that surrounds French Meadows Reservoir. This area is at the headwaters of the Placer County (County) and Placer County Water Agency (PCWA) Middle Fork Project (MFP), which provides water and hydroelectric power to the citizens of Placer County and the region. The FM Project has multiple agencies involved, including the County, PCWA, the TNF, the Nature Conservancy, the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, and others. The actual FM Project is estimated to take four years of ground work which began in June of 2019. The HR Project includes the marking and removal of several miles of hazard trees along the Forest Service Road 96 which leads to the FM Project.

Prior to each phase of the FM Project implementation, each operational area must be defined and physically marked by a qualified contractor to ensure that the exact specifications of USFS rules to perform work on federal land are followed. Typical pre-project operations will include: Timber marking and sample tree inventory, layout for mechanical thinning (tree removal for timber and biomass), layout for mastication (shredding small trees/brush), data processing of sample tree inventory, and unit mapping. All work will be in coordination with County staff and the TNF.

Mason Bruce & Girard, Inc. has performed this work on the FM Project for earlier agreements and was originally selected by an informal Request for Proposals process by Procurement Services. All FM Project partners, including the USFS and the County, trust this company to perform the work and would desire to continue their employment with this new Consulting Services Agreement. Based on this, County staff requested and received approval from Procurement Services for an exception to competition pursuant to the Placer County Purchasing Policy Section 1.3(a) for the remainder of the phases.

In order to move forward with the 2019 work for the FM Project, Staff recommends that your Board approve award of this Consulting Services Agreement and authorize the Director of Public Works, or designee, to execute the Agreement and change orders up to 10 percent.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Two Notices of Exemption (NOE) were filed for this FM Project: 1) The FM Project is consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15308 (Class 8 CEQA Categorical Exemption: Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of the Environment) because it is an action authorized by the Placer County Grading Ordinance that will help assure the maintenance, restoration, enhancement, or protection of the environment, and the regulatory process involves procedures for protection of the environment. This exemption was filed on December 21, 2018; and 2) The FM Project is consistent with Senate Bill (SB) 901. SB 901 provides that until January 1, 2023, CEQA would not apply to prescribed fire, thinning, or fuel reduction projects undertaken on federal lands to reduce the risk of high-severity wildlife that have been reviewed under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). This exemption was filed on January 24, 2019. The NEPA Decision Notice for the French Meadows Restoration Project was signed by the TNF Forest Supervisor on December 12, 2018.

FISCAL IMPACT

The Agreement with Mason Bruce & Girard, Inc. in the amount of \$226,420 with potential change orders up to 10 percent is funded through the Supplemental Project Agreement with the US Forest Service, Tahoe National Forest. This expenditure and reimbursement is included in the FY 2019-20 Final Budget, in the County Executive Office/Community and Agency Support budget.

ATTACHMENTS

None

On file with Clerk of the Board: Consulting Services Agreement with Mason Bruce & Girard, Inc.