



City of Tacoma

City Council Action Memorandum

TO: Elizabeth A. Pauli, City Manager
FROM: Chris Burke, Senior Environmental Specialist, Environmental Services *MPS*
 Michael P. Slevin III, P.E., Director, Environmental Services
COPY: City Council and City Clerk
SUBJECT: Request for Resolution: Interlocal Agreement for Flett Stormwater Ponds Aquatic Plant and Algae Maintenance Services from the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife – September 1, 2020
DATE: August 5, 2020

SUMMARY AND PURPOSE:

A resolution authorizing the execution of an interlocal agreement with the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife, Noxious Weed Program for the treatment of nuisance weeds in the Regional Flett Stormwater Ponds located within Mountain View Cemetery. Total value of agreement is \$300,000 at a rate not to exceed \$60,000/yr. from 4301 – ES Surface Water Utility Fund covering 2020-2024.

BACKGROUND:

This Department's Recommendation is Based On:

- The Flett Stormwater Ponds receive runoff from over 7,000 acres within the City of Tacoma. The ponds act to slow down and retain runoff during storm events, preventing upstream flooding, and downstream erosion and habitat degradation. Nuisance weeds block intake screens of the Flett Creek pump station.
- Removal of aquatic plants,
 - Reduces flood risk to Mountain View Cemetery and upstream properties.
 - Reduces risk to maintenance workers who clear blocked intake screens by hand.
 - Prevents spread of these weeds to downstream habitats, including the Flett Wetland and Flett Creek, a fish-bearing tributary of Chambers Creek and a key habitat for local fisheries.
- Herbicide treatment is the most cost effective plant removal alternative.
- The interlocal agreement with the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife is the most cost effective alternative.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/ CUSTOMER RESEARCH:

This project will potentially affect Mountain View Cemetery operations, customers, and upstream properties including a Weyerhaeuser lumber distribution center, Russell's Cabinetry, Evangelical Reformed Church, Willamette Dental and Abbey Carpet of Tacoma. This recommendation was developed through meetings with Mountain View Cemetery, Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the Department of Ecology. Adjacent property owners were notified and provided opportunity to comment during the NPDES Permit application.

2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Equity and Accessibility: Environmental Services seeks City Council approval to establish a maintenance contract with the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife for storm pond maintenance for localized flood control in Council District 5, South Tacoma. Combined equity index value here is low, with higher immigrant populations than the rest of the City, including Mexican, Vietnamese, and Filipino communities.



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Strategic goals include,

- Livability. Assure outstanding stewardship of the natural and built environment.
- Government Performance. Promote an efficient, fiscally responsible and effective government.

Economy/Workforce: *Equity Index Score: Low Opportunity*

Increase the number of infrastructure projects and improvements that support existing and new business developments.

Increase positive public perception related to the Tacoma economy.

By supporting the outcomes listed above, this flood control project will help support businesses in the area to improve the employment index and reduce the unemployment rate and poverty rate.

Education: *Equity Index Score: Very Low Opportunity*

No related indicators

Civic Engagement: *Equity Index Score: Low Opportunity*

Increase the percentage of residents who believe they are able to have a positive impact on the community and express trust in the public institutions in Tacoma.

Through this flood control project, the City is partly addressing the flood complaints in this area of the city thereby increasing public trust in the effectiveness of the stormwater utility.

Livability: *Equity Index Score: Low Opportunity*

Increase positive public perception of safety and overall quality of life.

How does your policy, program, or service help or harm the health of the natural environment? (e.g. reduction in carbon emissions, open space conditions, sustainability, clean air, water and soil, and noise and light pollution).

This project maintains regional stormwater facilities that reduce flooding nuisance, protect water quality and habitat in local streams and wetlands, and potentially increase median home value with less flooding.

Explain how your legislation will affect the selected indicator(s).

This project is located in South West Tacoma and provides multiple benefits through flood reduction to upstream and adjacent properties. Business operations are more efficient when not impeded by flooding and new businesses are more likely to move into adjacent vacant properties. Trust in public institutions increases when City infrastructure operates as designed during heavy rains and as businesses are able to operate without impediment, public perception of the economy increases. Similarly, public perception of safety is increased when streets and parking lots do not have standing water. The Flett pond system provides stormwater detention and treatment. The adjacent environment, including the downstream wetland and fish-bearing stream, benefit by increased control of stormwater flow.



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ALTERNATIVES:

Several alternatives are available for nuisance aquatic plant control. The 'No Action' alternative eliminates project expenditures but extends the risk of flooding adjacent properties as well as employee time clearing pump station screens. Mechanical harvesting was successfully employed in 2011. This method does not remove plant roots and nuisance plant coverage returned in six years. Additionally, the original plant disposal site is no longer available, significantly raising costs. Dredging will remove the majority of plants. Estimated cost of dredging is \$2,000,000. Nuisance plants will recolonize the site post dredging, they are present upstream and in adjacent wetlands. Herbicide application will provide five years of direct control, an additional four to six years post-control, will act on plant roots and is significantly lower cost than mechanical harvesting and dredging. The State Department of Fish and Wildlife is ideally suited for this work, the application team has intimate knowledge of sensitive aquatic species, experience working in critical aquatic habitats and a favorable relationship with the State Department of Ecology.

Alternative(s)	Positive Impact(s)	Negative Impact(s)
1. No Action	No budget impact	Flooding and property damage
2. Mechanical Harvesting	Eliminates herbicide use	3-5 times more expensive
3. Dredging	Maximum removal	Very expensive, limited gain of flood storage, unstable ecology

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP:

The NPDES Aquatic Plant and Algae General Permit allows annual herbicide treatment of 60% of the surface area of the ponds. Aerial video will be obtained prior to and six to eight weeks following treatment. Evaluation criteria include:

- Post-application extent of nuisance plants. KPI > 20% spatial reduction.
- Evidence of nuisance plants regrowth. KPI < 5% reestablishment.
- Native plant establishment. Presence/absence.
- Occurrence of algae blooms. KPI ≤ 1 bloom in summer.

STAFF/SPONSOR RECOMMENDATION:

Environmental Services recommends authorizing the execution of the interlocal agreement with the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife, in the maximum amount of \$60,000 per year, for a total of \$300,000 over five years, for annual Aquatic Plant and Algae Maintenance Services in the Regional Flett Stormwater Ponds. Recommended effective date September 2020.



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FISCAL IMPACT:

This interlocal agreement is budgeted in the maximum amount of \$60,000 per year, for a total of \$300,000 over five years, for annual Aquatic Plant and Algae Maintenance Services in the Regional Flett Stormwater Ponds.

Fund Number & Name	COST (CC/WBS/ORDER)	OBJECT	Cost Element	Total Amount
4301 - ES Surface Water Utility Fund	ENV-03020-18		Various	300,000.00
TOTAL				300,000.00

What Funding is being used to support the expense?

ES Surface Water Fund - 4301

Are the expenditures and revenues planned and budgeted in this biennium's current budget?

YES

Are there financial costs or other impacts of not implementing the legislation?

NO

Will the legislation have an ongoing/recurring fiscal impact?

YES

Expenditures are planned in the 2019-2020 biennium. Future annual expenditures will be budgeted as necessary, up to a maximum of five years.

Will the legislation change the City's FTE/personnel counts?

NO

ATTACHMENT:

- Draft Interlocal Agreement for Flett Stormwater Pond Aquatic Plant and Algae Maintenance Services from the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife.