



TO: Elizabeth A. Pauli, City Manager
FROM: Michael P. Slevin III, P.E., Director, Environmental Services
John Burk, P.E., Division Manager, Science and Engineering
COPY: City Council and City Clerk
SUBJECT: Interagency Agreement with Washington State Department of Ecology for maintenance and restoration of the City's habitat restoration sites and passive open spaces – September 24, 2019
DATE: September 6, 2019

MJSC

SUMMARY:

A resolution authorizing the execution of an interagency agreement with the Washington State Department of Ecology, in the amount not to exceed \$426,400, budgeted from the ES Surface Water Fund 4301, to assist in the maintenance and restoration of the City's habitat restoration sites and passive open spaces, for a one-year period, between October 7, 2019 and September 10, 2020.

STRATEGIC POLICY PRIORITY:

- Assure outstanding stewardship of the natural and built environment.

City participation in the Washington Conservation Corps (WCC) program provides knowledgeable and skilled crews to restore and maintain passive open space year-round. Proper stewardship of Tacoma's passive open spaces requires a routine presence for invasive species control, debris removal, and native plant installation and maintenance.

BACKGROUND:

The Environmental Services Department (ES) has begun restoration and stewardship activities on City-owned passive open space properties to retain and increase surface water benefits. Invasive vegetation currently threatens the ecosystem health of our open spaces and needs to be removed and those areas replanted with native species. Examples of major passive open space restoration efforts include the creation and implementation of the Schuster Slope, Mason Gulch, and Salmon Beach Slope landscape management plans. In addition, ES continues to fulfill obligations under the Foss Waterway Consent Decree.

The WCC program is an AmeriCorps program administered by the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology), that provides young adults (age 18-25) job and life skills in addition to an educational stipend (\$5,815) at program completion.

ISSUE:

The City of Tacoma has sponsored a WCC for eighteen years, which has allowed the City to provide environmental maintenance and improvements in a cost effective manner. Crewmembers perform activities such as removal of debris and invasive plants, as well as assist in habitat monitoring, restoration, and maintaining the open space/urban forestry plant holding facility.

Ecology has allocated two (2) WCC crews to ES for the 2019-2020 crew year. The cost for each crew is \$213,200 per year.



ALTERNATIVES:

Alternatives to approving the agreement include awarding the contract to another labor option (EarthCorps, etc.) at a much greater cost to the City or not approving the agreement at all. These options would not allow ES to maintain passive open spaces or City constructed restoration sites at the frequency or pace that is needed and committed to and the level of service at the open space/urban forestry plant holding facility would also decline.

RECOMMENDATION:

A resolution authorizing the execution of an interagency agreement with the Washington State Department of Ecology, in the amount not to exceed \$426,400, budgeted from the ES Surface Water Fund 4301, to assist in the maintenance and restoration of the City’s habitat restoration sites and passive open spaces, for a one-year period, between October 7, 2019 and September 10, 2020.

FISCAL IMPACT:

EXPENDITURES:

FUND NUMBER & FUND NAME	COST OBJECT (CC/WBS/ORDER)	COST ELEMENT	TOTAL AMOUNT
4301 Surface Water Fund	80019841	5330100	\$426,400
TOTAL			\$426,400

REVENUES:

FUNDING SOURCE	COST OBJECT (CC/WBS/ORDER)	COST ELEMENT	TOTAL AMOUNT
4301 Surface Water Fund	521900	Rate Revenues	\$426,400
TOTAL			\$426,400

FISCAL IMPACT TO CURRENT BIENNIAL BUDGET: \$426,400

ARE THE EXPENDITURES AND REVENUES PLANNED AND BUDGETED? Yes