



Santa Clara Valley Water District

File No.: 17-0123

Agenda Date: 3/14/2017

Item No.: 6.2.

BOARD AGENDA MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT:

Safe, Clean Water and Natural Flood Protection Program (SCW) Priority D - Project D3 (Grants and Partnerships to Restore Wildlife Habitat and Provide Access to Trails) Mini-Grant Pilot Program.

RECOMMENDATION:

- A. Approve the proposed Priority D - Project D3 Mini-Grant Pilot Program components listed below; including; and
- i. Mini-Grant Minimum Requirements and Evaluation Criteria;
 - ii. Submittal, Selection and Award Process;
 - iii. Application Form;
 - iv. Evaluation Score Sheet; and
 - v. Outreach Plan.
- B. Authorize the District to implement the Priority D3 Mini-Grant Pilot Program through June 30, 2018 or until the \$200,000 in funding is awarded (whichever occurs first); at which time staff will evaluate the program's success and present to the Board a recommendation for its continuation or termination.

SUMMARY:

The D3 Mini-Grant Pilot Program was approved by the Board in March of 2016 to support SCW Priority D - Project D3 to restore wildlife habitat and provide access to trails. The objective of the Project D3 Mini-Grant Pilot Program is to encourage broader community involvement and long-term community engagement to contribute to wildlife habitat restoration efforts in Santa Clara County (County). Funding for the Project D3 Mini-Grant Pilot Program awards is not intended to cover the entire cost of projects undertaken by a grant awardee, but rather to pay up to \$5,000 for each awardee's eligible project that is consistent with the goals of Priority D3 and contributes to the restoration of wildlife habitat in the County. The total approved project budget for this Project D3 Mini-Grant Pilot Program is \$200,000, which can fund at least 40 grant awards for an amount not to

exceed \$5,000 per grant award.

SCW Priority D - Project D3 (Grants and Partnerships to Restore Wildlife Habitat and Provide Access to Trails) requires that the District provide 7 grant cycles and additional partnerships for \$21 million that follow pre-established criteria related to the creation or restoration of wetlands, riparian habitat, and favorable stream conditions for fisheries and wildlife, and providing new public access to trails.

Additionally, SCW Project D3 has the following intended benefits:

- Enhances creek and bay ecosystems
- Improves fish passages and habitat
- Expands trail and open space access
- Leverages community funding through grants
- Increases collaborations and partnerships for stewardship activities with cities, the country, nonprofit organizations, schools and other stakeholders

The D3 Mini-Grant Pilot Program is designed to address priority D3 goals by achieving one or more of the following:

- i. Enhances creek and bay ecosystems
- ii. Improves fish passage and habitat
- iii. Increases community awareness and understanding of watershed stewardship

Examples of eligible activities include:

- i. Educational activities such as new educational or outreach pieces that promote watershed stewardship and wildlife habitat restoration or workshop, training or watershed tours specifically focused on watershed stewardship activities
- ii. Physical improvements, such as invasive plant removal, native planting, or removal of fish migration barriers

The Mini-Grant Minimum Requirements and Evaluation Criteria form (Attachment 1) identifies the minimum requirements that a project must meet to be considered for a grant award. In addition, the form identifies evaluation questions that will be used to evaluate each project meeting minimum requirements to determine whether an award should be granted. The evaluation questions will be incorporated into the Application Form (Attachment 3) Proposed projects meeting minimum requirements will be evaluated using the Evaluation Score Sheet (Attachment 4). The processes for submittal, selection and award of the Mini-Grants are provided in Attachment 2. The Outreach Plan (Attachment 5) provides the outreach goal and tactics for informing stakeholders about the Mini-Grant Program.

This item seeks Board approval of the Project D3 Mini-Grant Pilot Program components and the timeframe for implementing and evaluating the success of the pilot program.

BACKGROUND:

On August 25, 2015, the Board directed development of a pilot mini-grants program for the SCW Priority D- Project D3 (Priority for Wildlife Habitat Restoration (D3)). On March 15, 2016, the Board authorized the District CEO to implement a pilot mini-grants program.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Total funding available for the pilot mini-grants program in Fiscal Year 2017 (FY17) is \$200,000 and is budgeted under the SCW Priority D - Project D3. It is anticipated that at least 40 pilot mini-grants not to exceed an amount of \$5,000 per grant will be awarded to entities that carry out their proposed activities in the County to meet SCW Priority D3 goals. Grants will be awarded on a “first come first serve basis”. A minimum grantee match of 25% of project cost is required. This can be through a cash and/or an in-kind services match. Any funds remaining in FY17, will be carried forward for Fiscal Year 2018.

CEQA:

The recommended action does not constitute a project under CEQA because it does not have a potential for resulting in direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment. Specific projects being funded by the Project D3 Mini-Grant Pilot Program have undergone or will undergo CEQA review prior to construction and/or implementation of projects, as deemed appropriate by the grantee organizations and/or the District.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: Minimum Requirements and Evaluation Criteria
Attachment 2: Submittal, Selection and Award Process
Attachment 3: Application Form
Attachment 4: Evaluation Score Sheet
Attachment 5: Outreach Plan

UNCLASSIFIED MANAGER:

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