



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

AGENDA DATE: July 1, 2014

TO: Mayor and Councilmembers

FROM: Facilities Planning & Development Division, Airport Department

SUBJECT: Goleta Slough Ecosystem Management Plan Update and Estuary Inlet Modeling

RECOMMENDATION: That Council:

- A. Accept and authorize the Airport Director to execute a grant, subject to approval as to form by the City Attorney, in the amount of \$30,000 from the County of Santa Barbara Coastal Resource Enhancement Fund (CREF) for estuary inlet modeling for the Goleta Slough Ecosystem Management Plan sea-level rise study;
- B. Accept a US Fish and Wildlife Service Coastal Program grant, subject to approval as to form by the City Attorney, in the amount of \$16,480 to contribute to the preparation of an update to the Goleta Slough Ecosystem Management Plan;
- C. Increase appropriations and estimated revenues in the Airport Capital Fund by \$46,480, of which \$30,000 will be funded from the CREF grant, and \$16,480 from the US Fish and Wildlife Service grant; and
- D. Approve and authorize the Airport Director to execute a Contract Amendment with ESA PWA for preparation of additional modeling as a part of the update to the Goleta Slough Ecosystem Management Plan in a total contract amount not to exceed \$141,494.

DISCUSSION:

Background

In 1991, the Airport Department facilitated the creation of the Goleta Slough Management Committee (Committee) comprised of government agencies, property owners, and interest groups with the intent of working cooperatively to provide for a healthy Goleta Slough. The Committee was originally formed to provide input through the design, permitting, and construction of the Aviation Facilities Plan. In 1997, the Committee prepared the Goleta Slough Ecosystem Management Plan (Plan) with funding from the City. When the Aviation Facilities Plan was adopted in 2003, it included many of the recommended restoration efforts as mitigation measures. The

Airport was able to construct the Airfield Safety Projects and Goleta Slough stakeholders were able to realize over 40 acres of habitat restoration.

The Committee has no regulatory authority and is not an incorporated entity. The Committee exists only as a forum for Goleta Slough stakeholders to work collaboratively.

Plan Update

It has been sixteen years since the Goleta Slough Ecosystem Management Plan was originally developed. With the completion of major projects such as creek relocation, tidal circulation, and wetland and upland habitat restoration, the Plan no longer reflects the character of the Slough. Additionally, threats to habitat quality that were not addressed in the Plan, such as climate change and increased upstream development, present new challenges to the Slough.

The current Plan update involves a sea-level rise model, a risk and vulnerability assessment, stakeholder outreach, adaption strategies, and identification of future habitat restoration opportunities. The Plan will produce recommended actions and policies that agencies and property owners in the vicinity of the Slough can adopt to protect and enhance environmental resources. The information in the Plan will be useful in the preparation of the Airport Master Plan Environmental Impact Report.

In 2013, the Santa Barbara County Flood Control District discontinued efforts to renew the permits to maintain the opening of the Goleta Slough channel. The sea-level rise vulnerability analysis assumed an open channel as part of its assessment. As coastal flooding could become trapped in the Slough for an extended period when the mouth is blocked by a sand berm, the sea-level rise impacts to the Goleta Slough and surrounding development (including the Airport) are likely to be more severe than originally assessed. The preparation of an Inlet 13 Model as part of this Contract Amendment will enable the Goleta Slough Management Committee to assess impacts from sea level rise under varied, changing Slough mouth conditions.

Consultant Selection

In December 2011, the Goleta Slough Management Committee conducted a Request for Qualifications solicitation for planning and environmental consulting services.

Requests for Qualifications were sent to interested firms, and six responses were received and ranked. The three highest-ranking firms were interviewed in March 2012 by a sub-committee of the Goleta Slough Management Committee and the consulting firm ESA PWA was ranked as having the best qualifications for the work involved. The fee was negotiated after the best-qualified consultant was identified.

CREF Grant

In March 2014, the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors voted to award a \$30,000 grant to the City of Santa Barbara on behalf of the Goleta Slough Management

Committee for the preparation of inlet models in the Goleta Slough Ecosystem Management Plan update.

US Fish and Wildlife Service Grant

Recently, the US Fish and Wildlife Service approved \$16,480 in funding for coordination of stakeholders and other scientific research in the Plan development. This funding also serves as matching funds for the CREF grant.

BUDGET/FINANCIAL INFORMATION:

All of the work proposed to be completed under the Contract Amendment is funded by these two grant offers. Reflective of the collaborative nature of this Plan update, funding comes from multiple sources.

California Coastal Conservancy	\$50,000
<i>County of Santa Barbara</i>	<i>\$30,000</i>
Goleta Valley Land Trust	\$20,000
<i>US Fish and Wildlife Service</i>	<i>\$16,480</i>
Goleta West Sanitary District	\$15,000
<u>Airport Capital Fund</u>	<u>\$10,014</u>
Total Plan Update	\$141,494

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

The importance of the Goleta Slough is recognized and reflected in its designation as an Environmentally Sensitive Habitat in the City's Local Coastal Plan. Additionally the California Department of Fish and Game has designated parts of the Slough as an Ecological Reserve and State Marine Conservation Area. By establishing a shared Plan for the Slough, the City and the Goleta Slough Management Committee will increase the potential for preservation, restoration, and enhancement of vanishing coastal wetland habitat. Such efforts will promote the recovery of endangered plant and animal species, improve creek and ocean water quality, protect infrastructure from environmental threats such as sea-level rise, and ensure that the rich plant and animal diversity of the Slough will continue into the future.

PREPARED BY: Andrew Bermond, AICP, Project Planner

SUBMITTED BY: Hazel Johns, Airport Director

APPROVED BY: City Administrator's Office