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STAFF REPORT

Date: March 16, 2022

To: TRPA Governing Board

From: TRPA Staff

Subject: Authorization for TRPA to enter into a contract for environmental monitoring of the Tahoe Keys Lagoons Aquatic Weed Control Methods Test Project

Summary and Staff Recommendation:

Staff requests that the Governing Board authorize the TRPA Executive Director to execute a contract(s) that exceeds \$100,000 in value and was not approved in the TRPA budget with entities to perform monitoring tasks and lab services in support of the Tahoe Keys Control Methods Test (CMT).

Required Motions:

To authorize the Executive Director to execute contracts in support of the Tahoe Keys CMT, the Governing Board must make the following motion:

- A motion to authorize the Executive Director to enter into the contracts necessary to perform monitoring tasks and lab services in support of the Tahoe Keys Control Methods Test.

In order for the motion to pass, an affirmative vote of any 8 members of the Board is required

Background:

The Tahoe Keys lagoons are in the south shore area of Lake Tahoe and consist of a series of waterways and channels, approximately 170 surface acres in size. These waterways are almost entirely infested with invasive aquatic plants- Eurasian watermilfoil and curly-leaf pondweed. The CMT, recently approved by the boards of TRPA and Lahontan, was collaboratively developed to test standalone-treatments using herbicides, ultraviolet (UV-C) light, and Laminar Flow Aeration (LFA), and combination treatments of herbicide and UV-C light in the first year of the proposed CMT. These methods will be followed in Years 2 and 3 of the CMT with non-herbicide follow-up methods, including spot treatments using bottom barriers, diver-assisted suction/hand pulling, and UV-C treatments. Implementation of these follow-up methods would be dependent on the target plants present, size of infestation, and location of infestation.

TRPA is designated as the lead agency in the federally approved Lake Tahoe Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Management Plan (Plan). The Plan identifies goals, objectives and strategies to prevent and control AIS. TRPA serves as the fiscal agent for the Plan and is responsible for overseeing activities and projects intended to achieve Plan goals.

The Tahoe Keys is the AIS program's highest priority location for weed control as it is the largest aquatic weed infestation in the region and the predominant source for spread to the rest of the lake. TRPA will

continue the shared commitment of resources to the CMT through Lake Tahoe Restoration Act funding and TRPA staff time to ensure the CMT monitoring is objective and provides the critical information necessary to build the future treatment plan for the Tahoe Keys. Governing Board approval is necessary because the contract exceeds \$100,000, and was not identified in the approved FY 2022 Fiscal Year budget.

Project Description:

TRPA and the Lahontan Water Board (Lahontan) require a comprehensive monitoring program to support the implementation of the Tahoe Keys Lagoons Aquatic Weed Control Methods Test (CMT). This monitoring program is designed to detect potential environmental impacts and measure efficacy of weed control treatments. Data collected during the CMT will be essential to inform the future, long-term weed control plan for the entire Tahoe Keys.

TRPA and the Tahoe Keys Property Owners Association (TKPOA) will continue the collaborative partnership established during the CMT planning process and will work together during CMT implementation. TKPOA will be responsible for implementation of the CMT while TRPA will provide third-party monitoring services. TRPA will oversee contracts with selected entities to perform the following tasks:

- Aquatic herbicide and Rhodamine WT dye (RWT) monitoring- tracking fate and transport of aquatic herbicides, and instantaneous monitoring of RWT that serves as an herbicide surrogate.
- Nutrient water quality monitoring- to assess nutrient level changes from treatment activities (plant die off)
- Benthic macroinvertebrate monitoring- assess impacts to BMI communities from treatment activities
- Continuous water quality monitoring- real time and continuous monitoring of dissolved oxygen and water temperature that may be affected by treatments
- Macrophyte point sampling- plant sampling to demonstrate species distribution and assess efficacy of treatments
- Herbicide residue and degradant sample analysis- lab services
- Lanthanum modified clay sample analysis- lab services
- Nutrient and cyanobacteria sample analysis- lab services

Lahontan staff have reviewed each scope of work in the RFP package to ensure the work being requested meets permit monitoring requirements. The RFP package can be found on TRPA's website: https://www.trpa.gov/wp-content/uploads/Keys-Monitoring-RFP-Package_Final.pdf

This contract will be funded through Lake Tahoe Restoration Act (LTRA) funds through the US Fish and Wildlife Service. The RFP was issued on March 11th with proposals due on April 8th. Selection of the contractor will be completed by a panel of staff from TRPA, TKPOA and potentially other agencies and/or stakeholders. Time is of the essence since the monitoring plan must be prepared before project work can commence.

Contact Information:

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