



City of Arts & Innovation

City Council Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL DATE: SEPTEMBER 21, 2021

FROM: PUBLIC UTILITIES DEPARTMENT WARDS: ALL

SUBJECT: COST SHARING AGREEMENT BETWEEN SAN BERNARDINO VALLEY MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT AND CITY OF RIVERSIDE FOR THE PARTICIPATION IN THE SALT AND NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE UPPER SANTA ANA RIVER WATERSHED GROUNDWATER BASINS IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$23,654

ISSUES:

Approve the Cost Sharing Agreement between San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District and City of Riverside in an amount not to exceed \$23,654, and the Riverside Public Utilities participation in the Preparation of the Salt and Nutrient Management Plan for the Upper Santa Ana River Watershed Groundwater Basins.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the City Council:

1. Approve the Cost Sharing Agreement between San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District and City of Riverside in an amount not to exceed \$23,654; and
2. Approve RPU's participation in the Preparation of the Salt and Nutrient Management Plan for the Upper Santa Ana River Watershed Groundwater Basins and fund RPU's share in an amount not to exceed \$23,654.

BOARD RECOMMENDATION:

On September 13, 2021, the Board of Public Utilities will consider recommending approval of the Cost Sharing Agreement between San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District and City of Riverside and consider Riverside Public Utilities participation in the Preparation of the Salt and Nutrient Management Plan for the Upper Santa Ana River Watershed Groundwater Basins

If the Board of Public Utilities approves to forward this item to City Council, staff respectfully requests that the City Council consider this item at their September 21, 2021 meeting.

BACKGROUND:

The Salt and Nutrient Management Plan (SNMP) is required to permit and implement various water resource management projects in the Upper Santa Ana Watershed. The SNMP assesses the impacts that salt and nitrate have on the long-term sustainability of groundwater supply.

The plan will be useful to analyze potential long-term basin-wide effects on groundwater quality that result from activities such as discharges from newly constructed projects involving surface water, groundwater, imported water, and/or recycled water, as well as other salt/nutrient contributing activities through regional groundwater monitoring.

The SNMP will estimate ambient water quality in groundwater basins, it will assess compliance with groundwater quality objectives, and determine if assimilative capacity exists in groundwater management zones (GMZs). The completion and implementation of the SNMP may lead to the potential for enhanced partnering opportunities and potential project funding between water agencies and other stakeholders in the Upper Santa Ana Watershed for developing and protecting local groundwater supplies.

A well-designed SNMP will benefit the region by facilitating and incentivizing stormwater capture and water reuse projects while assuring that such projects are implemented in a manner that fully protects beneficial uses and mitigates any adverse effects on water quality. It could also conclude that additional water treatment facilities are unnecessary potentially saving the region millions of dollars.

DISCUSSION:

The San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District (Valley), on behalf of the Upper Santa Ana River Watershed Stakeholders including Western Municipal Water District, City of Colton, City of Redlands, City of Rialto, Riverside Public Utilities (RPU), East Valley Water District, City of San Bernardino Municipal Water Department, San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District, San Geronimo Pass Water Agency, Yucaipa Valley Water District, in cooperation with the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board, hired Tim Moore, an expert in these types of analyses and long-time advisor to the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority Basin Monitoring Program Task Force, to develop the scope of work for this effort.

The scope of work was released in a Request for Proposal. One proposal was received from Water Systems Consulting (WSC) with support from Geoscience Support Services, Woodard & Curran, and LeClaire & Associates. The proposal was reviewed by an inter-agency review team comprised of staff from the San Bernardino Municipal Water Department, San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District, Western Municipal Water District, City of Riverside Public Utilities, and Valley District. The review team unanimously recommended, and the Stakeholders unanimously support choosing this highly qualified team due to their extensive experience working the Santa Ana Watershed, including the ambient water quality analysis, development of the Integrated Santa Ana River Model, expert groundwater modeling experience, and experience preparing, submitting and obtaining approval on other SNMP's.

On January 19, 2021, the San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water Districts Board authorized Valley's staff recommendation, on behalf of the stakeholders, to hire Water Systems Consulting, Inc. (WSC) for the preparation of the SNMP in the amount of \$473,073. The WSC team includes consultants with significant water quality experience in the Watershed – Geoscience Support Services, LeClaire & Associates, and Woodard & Curran. Valley District has received approval

from their Board to cover 50% of the costs (\$236,537), with the remaining balance of the project cost to be split evenly between the remaining participating stakeholders. RPU's participation will be a not to exceed amount of \$23,654.

The SNMP will use a collaborative, phased approach as summarized below:

- Phase 1 Perform a Water Quality Analysis of the GMZs listed above and will compute historical and existing TDS and nitrate concentrations using data from 1990 to 2018, characterize any significant trends, and calculate the current, available assimilative capacity, if any, for TDS and nitrate. Phase 1 is expected to be completed by late summer of 2021.
- Phase 2 Utilize the Integrated Santa Ana River Water Quality Model to evaluate the GMZs with the proposed stormwater capture projects, anticipated SWP imports, and recycled water projects from the IRWMP. Phase 2 will also evaluate localized water quality impacts to specific drinking water wells, if any. If the Phase 2 analysis indicates that an increase in water quality objectives is possible, the Stakeholders would then obtain a proposal for Phase 3 to develop a formal SNMP for submission to the Regional Board. Phase 2 will be completed by December of 2021.
- Phase 3 (optional) Develop an SNMP that would provide a detailed description of the proposed projects along with the proposed water quality monitoring program and any other commitments required by the State's Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). The SNMP would then be used as a backup for a request that the objectives be raised by the RWQCB. This type of process has occurred in other areas, including the Yucaipa Basin, and has often been referred to as a "maximum benefit" analysis because of the need to demonstrate that the findings maintain a high quality of waters in California and deliver maximum benefit to the people of the State. Depending on the RWQCB's review and requirements, phase 3 will be completed approximately by the summer of 2022.

RPU's participation is recommended in this joint regional effort to ensure that the City of Riverside interests are considered and evaluated in the study and that the findings and recommended path forward protects the water supplies of the Upper Santa Ana River Watershed into the future.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

The preparation of a regional project such as the SNMP supports the priorities of the City of Riverside's Envision Riverside 2025 Strategic Plan, which contributes to Environmental Stewardship Strategic Priority No. 4 and Goal No. 4.2 – Sustainably manage local water resources to maximize reliability and advance water reuse to ensure safe, reliable and affordable water to our community.

This item aligns with each of the five Cross-Cutting Threads as follows:

1. **Community Trust** – This project is a cooperative effort between multiple regional water agencies and stakeholders that went through numerous meetings to prepare the scope of work and receive input to strengthen a larger community outreach and result in greater public good.
2. **Equity** – RPU endeavors to provide safe and reliable water service to all its customers.

Since RPU's water system is an interconnected network, investments made to individual parts of the system improve the reliability of the overall system, thereby providing an equitable benefit to all customers

3. **Fiscal Responsibility** – RPU is contributing five percent of the project cost but will benefit from the shared results of the study equally among the stakeholders.
4. **Innovation** – This project proposal is using an innovative approach to study the Salt and Nutrient in the Upper Santa Ana River Watershed and will also be using innovative sampling techniques.
5. **Sustainability & Resiliency** – This project has a direct contribution to the sustainability, reliability, and best management of the long term groundwater supplies in the region.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The total fiscal impact of this action is \$23,654. Sufficient funds are budgeted and available in the Water Fund, Public Utilities Water Engineering Professional Services Account No. 6210000-421000.

Prepared by: Todd M. Corbin, Utilities General Manager
Certified as to
availability of funds: Edward Enriquez, Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer
Approved by: Al Zelinka, FAICP, City Manager
Approved as to form: Phaedra A. Norton, City Attorney

Attachments:

1. Cost Sharing Agreement for The Upper Santa Ana River Watershed Salt and Nutrient Management Plan Between San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District and City of Riverside
2. Presentation