



## **REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL**

**To:** Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

**From:** Grant Yates, City Manager

**Prepared by:** Nicole Dailey, Assistant to the City Manager

**Date:** March 26, 2019

**Subject:** Agreement for Contract Services with Wood Environment & Infrastructure Solutions, Inc. to fulfill Clean Up and Abatement Funding Authorization Grant

### **Recommendation**

Approve and authorize the City Manager to execute the Contractor Services Agreement with Wood Environment & Infrastructure Solutions, Inc. (Wood) to allow for a two (2) year term in a total amount not to exceed \$41,770, in such final form as approved by the City Attorney.

### **Background**

The Holy Fire began on August 6, 2018 and reached full containment on September 13, 2018 with a total burned area of 23,025 acres (35.9 square miles). The fire left the City and surrounding areas prone to debris and mud flows during rainfall events for the next few years. Lake Elsinore is within the Holy Fire's burned watershed area, with McVicker, Leach and Dickey Canyons draining to the lake.

Since the Holy Fire, the City has received significant rainfall of varying intensities with a to date accumulation of more than 25 inches in the Holy Fire burn area canyons. This rainfall has led to significant sediment runoff into the lake carrying with it fire resultant chemicals, nutrient loads, toxins and heavy metals. The runoff has created a large sediment plume at the mouth of Leach Canyon Channel in the northern part of the lake just west of La Laguna Boat Launch.

Additionally, from December 20th to January 24th, Lake Elsinore experienced an unusual fish die-off resulting in the loss of nearly 150 tons of fish. The City's consultant, Wood, conducted various sampling events and toxicity testing to determine the cause of the fish die off. Results showed the cause was a Golden Algae bloom occurring in the lake, which has never been documented for Lake Elsinore. It is currently unclear whether the Holy Fire runoff contributed to this new type of algae bloom.

To fully understand the impacts of the Holy Fire runoff to the lake and its long and short-term water quality, City staff in conjunction with the Regional Water Quality Control Board applied for and received approval for funding for further analysis from the State Water Resources Control Board for Cleanup and Abatement (CAA).

The purpose of the project is to investigate the extent of, and conduct a waste characterization of, the Leach Canyon Channel sediment/debris plume. The collected data will be used to evaluate whether the debris/sediment material poses short and/or long-term public health risks to the community and to recreational uses of the lake including fishing. Further, the sediment will be studied to determine if it has contributed to the recent fish die-off event and if removal of this sediment is required.

### **Discussion**

In February 2019, Wood submitted a Scope of Work to the City to fulfill the project requirements outlined in the City's successful CAA grant application. Entitled "Scope of Work for In-Lake Holy Fire Runoff Sediment & Water Monitoring", the project will perform an extended characterization of the Holy Fire resultant in-Lake sediment plume and water quality sampling in the Lake. This data will be used to determine whether this runoff poses a threat to public health, is causing/contributing to an ongoing fish die-off, or could contribute to a serious setback in progress made in the current nutrient TDML in the Lake.

Approval of Wood's Scope of Work and execution of the Agreement for Contract Services is necessary and is the first step in moving forward with efforts to make use of the CAA grant funds allocated to the City. The Scope of Work fulfills the requirements of the CAA grant and will give the City and the State and Regional Water Boards an understanding of current and future challenges that are facing the Lake and how to address them. The project will be completed by Wood within 60 days of issuance of the Notice to Proceed.

### **Fiscal Impact**

The total overall cost for the services provided by Wood is estimated to be \$41,770 covered fully through the funding approved by the Stater Water Resources Control Board.

### **Exhibits**

- A – Scope of Work for In-Lake Holy Fire Runoff Sediment & Water Monitoring
- B – Vicinity Map