

Los Cerritos Wetlands Authority

Date: November 2, 2023

To: Governing Board Members

From: Mark Stanley, Executive Officer

Subject: Item 08: Consideration of a resolution authorizing the Executive Officer to negotiate and award a contract for final planning and permitting of the Southern Los Cerritos Wetlands Restoration Project.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Los Cerritos Wetlands Authority (LCWA) authorize the Executive Officer to negotiate and award a contract for final planning and permitting of the Southern Los Cerritos Wetlands Restoration Project

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: With receipt of grant funds for the Southern Los Cerritos Wetlands Restoration (SLCWR) Project, a Request for Proposals (RFP) will be prepared to seek qualified firms to finalize all required permits and produce the final restoration design construction plans for the 103.5-acre SLCWR Project. The designs will build on the existing 65% construction design plans and the [SLCWR Project's Final Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration \(IS/MND\)](#), which describes restoration to be implemented in two phases. The Consultant will provide bid support and construction support for the implementation of Phase 1 of the Project which measures approximately 54 acres in size. Qualified firms would include specialists in archeological and tribal cultural resources, tidal salt marsh habitat restoration design and engineering, landscape architecture, and other appropriate environmental planning and permitting disciplines. The LCWA intends to contract the work with a single primary consultant, which may perform the work in-house or through one or more subcontractors.

A major deliverable is final construction documents containing enough detail for construction of the entire SLCWR Project. The plans will include:

- 1) restoration of tidal marsh, as well as transition zones and coastal upland habitat to allow for upslope wetland migration in response to sea level rise,
- 2) creation of public access trails and facilities,
- 3) relocation or redesign of existing utilities and roadways,
- 4) a grading plan covering the remediation of contaminated soils and details regarding the beneficial reuse of cut material, and
- 5) improved hydrological connections and flood management facilities.

Parallel to the RFP, a Request for Qualifications will be released for project management, public outreach, environmental compliance, and construction management services. Future approval from the board will be sought to approve a list of consultants with these specialties to accomplish the scope of the grant awards for the Southern Los Cerritos Wetlands Restoration Project.

BACKGROUND: On September 14, 2023, the State Coastal Conservancy (SCC) Governing Board approved a grant award of up to \$31,852,000 for the LCWA's Southern Los Cerritos Wetlands Restoration Project (SLCWR Project). The funding was awarded to conduct planning and permitting for restoration and for providing public access on the 103.5-acre site (Exhibit A),

and construction of Phase 1 of restoration and public access improvements on 54 acres of site, and for management of the wetlands.

As a component of the \$31,852,000, the Ocean Protection Council (OPC) anticipates consideration of a grant of up to \$6,000,000 for the SLCWR Project at their next Council Meeting in December, utilizing funds collected through the Once Through Cooling Mitigation Policy. The OPC grant award would offset the funding award from SCC by that amount for planning and permitting of the SLCWR Project, and construction of Phase 1.

The SLCWR Project is the first large scale restoration effort to be implemented in the Los Cerritos Wetlands after more than a decade of planning and stakeholder engagement. The SLCWR Project will restore degraded uplands and tidal salt marsh, increasing coastal resilience to climate change by creating new areas for coastal salt marsh migration in the face of sea level rise. This will additionally offer opportunities for Tribal access and co-management and will result in open space access for communities in Seal Beach, Long Beach, and inland along the San Gabriel River bike trail.

Past planning efforts conducted by the LCWA include the Los Cerritos Wetlands Conceptual Restoration Plan (CRP), the Los Cerritos Wetlands Restoration Plan Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR), and the Southern Los Cerritos Wetlands Restoration Project Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND). The SLCWR Project MND was certified by the LCWA Governing Board on August 24, 2023 (LCWA Resolution 2023-03). The MND can be access on the LCWA's website here: <https://intoloscerritoswetlands.org/southern-los-cerritos-wetlands-restoration-project/>.

FISCAL: Funding for the professional services contract will be provided by grants from the State Coastal Conservancy, Ocean Protection Council, and AES Voluntary Grant Program.