

Central Services  
Joan Araujo, Director

Engineering Services  
Anastasia Seims, Director

Roads & Transportation  
Anitha Balan, Director

Water & Sanitation  
Vacant, Director

Watershed Protection  
Jeff Palmer, Director

October 29, 2024

Board of Supervisors  
Ventura County Watershed Protection District  
800 South Victoria Avenue  
Ventura, CA 93009

**Subject: Approval of and Authorization for the Ventura County Watershed Protection District Director or His Designee to Execute Amendment No.1 to Memorandum of Agreement No. WP-1-2023-04 to increase funding for Casitas Municipal Water District Staff Support for the Robles Diversion Preliminary Design Project in the amount of \$746,590.42, including future Modifications to the Agreement that do not exceed funds provided, for a new Not to Exceed amount of \$809,784.34; Project No. P6081924, Watershed Protection District Zone No. 1, Supervisorial District No. 1.**

**Recommendations:**

1. Approve the attached Amendment No. 1 to Memorandum of Agreement No. WP-1-2023-4 with the Casitas Municipal Water District to increase funding for Casitas Municipal Water district staff support for the Robles Diversion Preliminary Design Project in the amount of \$746,590.42 for a new Not to Exceed amount of \$809,784.34.
2. Authorize the District Director, or his designee, to execute the approved Amendment No. 1 to Memorandum of Agreement No. WP-1-2023-4 including any future modifications to the Agreement that do not increase District's reimbursement obligation above the amount of available grant funding.

**Fiscal/Mandates Impact:**

|                                |                           |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Mandatory:                     | No                        |
| Source of Funding:             | State Coastal Conservancy |
| Funding Match Required:        | No                        |
| Impact on Other Department(s): | None                      |

**Summary of Revenue and Total Costs:**

|          |    |                          |    |                                  |
|----------|----|--------------------------|----|----------------------------------|
|          |    | <b><u>FY 2024-25</u></b> |    | <b><u>FY 2025-26</u></b>         |
|          |    |                          |    | <b><u>through FY 2026-27</u></b> |
| Revenue: | \$ | 293,794                  | \$ | 452,797                          |



**Costs:**

|                          |    |         |    |         |
|--------------------------|----|---------|----|---------|
| Direct                   | \$ | 293,794 | \$ | 452,797 |
| Indirect – Agency/Dept.  | \$ | 0       | \$ | 0       |
| Indirect – County CAP    | \$ | 0       | \$ | 0       |
| Total Costs              | \$ | 293,794 | \$ | 452,797 |
| Net Costs                | \$ | 0       | \$ | 0       |
| Recovered Indirect Costs | \$ | 0       | \$ | 0       |

**Current Fiscal Year Budget Projections:**

| Current FY 2024-25 Budget Projection for Zone 1 - Unit 4211 |                |                 |                  |                             |
|---|----------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------------------|
|   | Adopted Budget | Adjusted Budget | Projected Budget | Estimated Savings/(Deficit) |
| Appropriations  | \$9,580,000    | \$9,580,000     | \$9,580,000      | \$0                         |
| Revenue   | \$13,539,200   | \$13,539,200    | \$13,539,200     | \$0                         |
| Net Cost  | (\$3,959,200)  | (\$3,959,200)   | (\$3,959,200)    | \$0                         |

Sufficient revenue and appropriations are available in the FY 2024-25 Watershed Protection District Zone 1 Adjusted Budget. Sufficient appropriations will be included in the FY 2025-26 through FY 2026-27 Budgets, as appropriate.

**Discussion:**

On November 1, 2022, your Board accepted a \$379,350 State Coastal Conservancy (SCC) Grant, to complete preliminary design plans for the preferred Robles Project improvements that will facilitate natural sediment transport through and/or around the Robles Diversion on the Ventura River; enhance volitional fish passage across a range of flow conditions; improve the reliability of diversions into the Robles-Casitas Canal whenever hydrologic and permit conditions allow; and reduce flood risks at Robles and potentially for the nearby Meiners Oaks community. See Exhibits 1 and 2 for the Robles Project vicinity and location maps.

A redesign of Robles is one of six essential downstream infrastructure components of the Matilija Dam Ecosystem Restoration Project (MDERP). MDERP is a watershed-scale initiative to safely remove the Matilija Dam after a high-flow sediment release, enabling the re-wilding of Matilija Creek upstream of the current barrier to benefit federally endangered southern California steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) and other species in the Ventura River watershed.

A 'Work Program' was developed in accordance with the requirements of the SCC Grant that requires the assistance of staff from Casitas Municipal Water District (Casitas) to



locate, retrieve and interpret pertinent data, coordinate the installation and operation of monitoring devices and programs, and to provide their operational knowledge critical to advancing the Robles Project improvements preliminary design.

Casitas operates and maintains the Robles Diversion Facility on behalf of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, making it the only essential MDERP component that is neither owned nor maintained by Ventura County. Matilija Dam cannot be removed unless/until agreed-upon improvements at Robles and all other essential components have been implemented. Casitas also owns and operates the Robles Fish Passage Facility. Water diversions for fish passage and for conveyance to Lake Casitas are governed by a 2003 Biological Opinion issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service.

Casitas' active engagement in the preliminary design planning process is key to formulating, testing, and consensus building for a preferred alternative for the proposed Robles improvements, and in completing design plans that Casitas believes it will be able to operate and maintain successfully in the years and decades ahead – before, during and after Dam removal.

The complexities of the project objectives to meet regulatory requirements for fish passage while preserving Casitas ability to maintain reliable water supply and pass elevated sediment flows resulting from dam removal prompted the SCC to increase the grant amount by \$3.2M in additional funding on June 28, 2024 through Amendment No. 1 to SCC grant Agreement SC22-006 (Exhibit 3) to support additional technical analysis and review including Casitas staff time for technical support of the preliminary design.

Transmitted herewith is Amendment No. 1 to the Memorandum of Agreement (Exhibit 4) that provides for additional reimbursement to Casitas by the District up to and not to exceed amount of the amount of \$746,590.42 which combined with the \$63,193.92 for staff reimbursement authorized in the original agreement provides for a total staff reimbursement to Casitas of up to \$809,784.34.

Work reimbursed by this agreement supports preliminary design contract work under contract AE23-045 approved by your Board on April 25, 2023 in the amount of \$1,456,000 by Northwest Hydraulic Consultants. Contract AE23-045 was increased by \$38,325 under Modification 1 to the contract on November 13, 2023 and increased again by \$146,596 under Modification 2 of the contract on June 15, 2024 for a total contract amount of \$1,640,921 and the work is continuing.

### **Strategic Plan:**

This item contributes to the Board of Supervisors (Board's) 2024-2027 strategic priority to provide:

- III. Reliable infrastructure and sustainability through
  - 3. Investing in sustainable infrastructure, renewable energy, and preservation of our natural resources.



This item has been reviewed by the County Executive Office, the Auditor-Controller's Office, and County Counsel.

If you have any questions concerning this item, please contact the undersigned at (805) 654-2040.

Sincerely,



Jeff Palmer, P.E.  
Director  
Watershed Protection District

Attachments:

- Exhibit 1 – Project Vicinity Map
- Exhibit 2 – Project Location Map
- Exhibit 3 – SCC Grant Amendment 1
- Exhibit 4 – MOA Amendment 1

