



ACTION ITEM

Contract with the University of California, Davis to Fund San Francisco Estuary & Watershed Science (SFEWS)

Summary: Staff requests approval of a contract with UC Davis to support San Francisco Estuary and Watershed Science (SFEWS), the only open-access journal focused on science for water and ecosystems in the Estuary and its watershed. Staff recommends that the Council support approval of the contract with UC Davis to fund the SFEWS publication.

REQUESTED ACTION

Staff requests that the Council approve Resolution #2022-04, which will authorize the Executive Officer, or delegee, to enter a new three-year contract with UC Davis for an amount not to exceed \$1,533,525 for the continued publication of the SFEWS online journal from July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2025.

The Executive Officer has delegated authority up to \$750,000 to enter into contracts and interagency agreements on the Council's behalf. As this contract exceeds that amount, it requires Council authorization.

BACKGROUND

As identified in the Delta Reform Act, "the mission of the Delta Science Program is to provide the best possible scientific information for water and environmental decision making in the Bay-Delta system ... through funding research, synthesizing and communicating scientific information to policymakers and decisionmakers, promoting independent scientific peer review, and coordinating with Delta agencies to promote science-based adaptive management." (WC 85280(b)(4).) The Delta Science Program fulfills this mission, in part, through funding research and facilitating science communication, including the peer-reviewed publication of research findings in SFEWS.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE TOPIC

SFEWS is a significant outlet for peer-reviewed content of recent scientific findings for the Delta and Bay. Numerous SFEWS articles are cited in the influential National Academy of Sciences book, Sustainable Water and Environmental Management in the California Bay-Delta. The relevance of SFEWS to regional policy also has grown, as evidenced by citations supporting water management regulations (Luoma and Muscatine, 2019).

One of the most popular features of the journal is policy-relevant short essays aimed at decision-makers. In 2020, the journal launched a new feature to reach non-scientists through Estuary Pearls, published by the San Francisco Estuary Partnership. After each issue of SFEWS is published, Estuary Pearls distributes an electronic newsletter with a summary of each paper that describes the findings of interest or value to the public.

Since the journal's inception in October 2003, page views and downloads have grown to over 11,000 per quarter, up from 800 when the journal was first published. SFEWS plans to increase journal access and expand readership in several ways consistent with rapidly changing technology:

- Hiring a half-time Communications Assistant to help the Managing Editor to produce and enhance digitally based components that drive and track the journal's quarterly publication cycles to secure its effectiveness;
- Publishing two special issues of the State of Bay-Delta Science (SBDS) in 2022 and 2024;
- Encouraging contractors and fellowships funded by the Council to submit research results to SFEWS;
- Encouraging synthesis papers, prepared as part of our joint science symposia with UC Davis, to be submitted to SFEWS;
- Promoting SFEWS through social media outlets and blogs and at local conferences and workshops;

- Using new digital tools that allow the scientific and management communities to more widely and reliably find the content that SFEWS publishes.

FISCAL INFORMATION

The publication of SFEWS is a shared effort of the Council, UC Davis, the California Digital Library (CDL), and the US Geological Survey (USGS). The Council provides direct financial contributions, while the CDL, UC Davis, USGS, and others provide in-kind services that represent approximately 33% (\$762,000) of the total costs of publication. In-kind services from the CDL include the journal's electronic publishing platform, direct web access to the journal, and IT support. UC Davis provides an independent, university-based "home" for the journal. The USGS supports computer and IT services for the Editor-in-Chief.

The proposed new contract would be in an amount not to exceed \$1,533,525 for a term from July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2025. This cost reflects a three-year agreement, which includes a new half-time Communications Assistant position, and two special issues for SBDS in 2022 and 2024.

LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Resolution #2022-04

REFERENCES

Luoma, S.N., and Muscatine, L.D. Dec 2019. Sixteen Years of San Francisco Estuary & Watershed Science: A Retrospective. *San Francisco Estuary and Watershed Science*.

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