



bay restoration commission

STEWARDS OF SANTA MONICA BAY

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November 11, 2011

Agenda Item #3 a ii

To: Executive Committee, SMBRC

From: Shelley Luce, Executive Director

Subject: Amendment to Proposition 84 Grant Award to City of Calabasas

Action Requested of the Executive Committee:

- Review and recommend an amendment to a Proposition 84 grant award for a City of Calabasas trash screen installation project that may be considered by the Governing Board at its December 2011 meeting.

Background

In August 2011 the Governing Board approved a grant in the amount of \$168,000 to the City of Calabasas (City) to install a minimum of 400 catch basin screens made out of 95% post-consumer recycled plastic in all stormdrains that discharge to Las Virgenes Creek. The screens would help prevent trash and debris from entering the stormdrains which eventually discharge into Las Virgenes Creek and Santa Monica Bay beaches. At the meeting, concerns were expressed as to whether these devices could be installed in County storm drains. The Governing Board approved the grant, but directed staff to work with the City and County of Los Angeles (County) to determine if the plastic screens were allowable.

County staff has since indicated that the County would allow the use of the plastic screens with the stipulation that they be removed prior to the onset of the rainy season to prevent potential flooding. While economical, these screens do not open up under certain designed flow volumes. This can be contrasted with the County-approved screens, which can remain in place and "automatically" open up once flows reach a critical volume, thus reducing the potential for flooding while still capturing low flow wet weather events. If the City were to opt for the plastic screens, there would be no opportunity to capture low flow wet weather events.

Staff has determined that there are two feasible alternatives, both requiring Governing Board approval, as follows:

Option one is to reduce the scope of work and direct the City to install County-approved catch basin screens at priority basins throughout the watershed. The grant amount of \$168,000 would remain the same however, the number of catch basins where screens would be installed would be reduced by about 50% due to the increased costs of the County-approved screens. The City states that the screens would still meet the requirements of the Trash TMDL.

our mission: to restore and enhance the santa monica bay through actions and partnerships that improve water quality, conserve and rehabilitate natural resources, and protect the bay's benefits and values





Option two is to increase the grant award and direct the City to fulfill the terms of the original agreement, but install approved screens at all storm drain locations. This option would require the Governing Board to augment the grant agreement by an additional \$259,800 bringing the SMBRC's commitment to \$427,800.

Staff Recommendation

Although the City's goal of "zero trash" is laudable, staff recommends Option one. If the City installs County-approved screens at high trash generating sites, approximately 50% of the storm drain inlets within the city will be retrofitted. Staff has concluded that this will have a major positive impact on water quality in the Malibu Creek watershed and that the City will be in compliance with the Malibu Creek watershed Trash TMDL. Staff believes that the benefits of retrofitting every storm drain will produce little additional benefit at substantially increased cost.

Note: The original project description from the August 2011 Governing Board staff report is re-printed below for your reference:

Project: City of Calabasas Trash Basin Inserts

Applicant: City of Calabasas

Amount Requested: \$168,000

Match: \$40,820

The City of Calabasas will install a minimum of 400 catch basin screens made out of 95% post-consumer recycled plastic in all stormdrains that discharge to Las Virgenes Creek. This includes the west side of the City. The screens will help prevent trash and debris from entering the stormdrains which eventually discharge into Las Virgenes Creek and Santa Monica Bay beaches. Trash screens will capture trash and debris greater than 5mm in size. The city estimates that average capture will be approximately 12 pounds of debris per applicable drain per quarter (dry weight). However, there are large variations in the amount of trash and debris collected by each drain in relation to location and size. The estimates were based on data from a previous pilot project, and street sweeper and CDS unit tonnage reports.

Site Description: Excluders will be installed at a minimum of 400 catch basins within the city that drain to Santa Monica Bay via Las Virgenes and Malibu Creek.

Project Benefits: Preventing trash from reaching local creeks and streams, beaches, and the Bay removes a potential hazard to human health and aquatic life, and helps protect aesthetics of these natural areas. Implementation of the project will help meet the Malibu Creek TMDL. Trash screens will capture trash and debris greater than 5mm in size. The city estimates that average capture will be approximately 12 pounds of debris per applicable drain per quarter (dry weight).

Staff has determined that the Trash Excluder Project is exempt from CEQA under Title 14 CCR Section 15301 (projects involving the minor alteration of existing structures and facilities involving negligible or no expansion of an existing use).