



Cochise County

Community Development

Highway and Floodplain Division

Public Programs...Personal Service
www.cochise.az.gov

March 2, 2018

To: Flood Control District Board of Directors

From: Joaquin Solis, P.E., Interim County Engineer

Subject: Accept grant funding in the amount of \$500,000 from The United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) for a cooperative grant and contribution agreement for the Buena School Watershed Plan, Environmental Assessment and Engineering Design (aka Bella Vista Urban Enhanced Runoff Recharge Project).

Recommendation: Approve the grant agreement in the amount of \$500,000 from the NRCS and authorize matching County in-kind contributions of up to \$100,000.

Background: On August 25, 2017 Cochise County Highway & Floodplain applied for initial grant funding from NRCS in the approximate amount of \$8M to engineer, permit, and construct a facility in or along the Coyote Wash (Bella Vista Recharge Project) capable of recharging Urban Enhanced Runoff (UER). Cochise County was awarded an initial grant in the amount of \$500,000 to provide watershed planning, environmental assessment, and an engineering design. Being selected for funding through design is a good indicator that a request for construction funding upon design and cost estimate completion, would be judged favorably in a future grant funding round (if NRCS funding is budgeted and authorized).

The proposed action for this project is to construct a facility that will collect the increased stormwater runoff due to development—UER—generated in the Coyote Wash watershed and flowing through the County owned Bella Vista Recharge property, and utilize that extra runoff to recharge the aquifer at the downstream end of the Bella Vista property. The goal is to enhance the base flows in the San Pedro River and groundwater modeling predicts that a project in this location will have a positive effect on San Pedro River base flows. Enhancing base flows in the San Pedro, even slightly, will help to protect riparian habitat and species of concern. Protecting this habitat and species helps ensure the future viability of an important riparian river system and of Fort Huachuca—a major economic driver in Cochise County. By carefully collecting and recharging UER, the facility will leave the pre-development flood flows intact that are essential for the floodplain regeneration in the San Pedro River and Coyote Wash tributary downstream.

To assure appropriate procurement processes, The Procurement Department is coordinating the consultant procurement for the project. Qualified consultants have been properly identified and the Request For Proposals (RFP) has begun. Assuming approval of the grant by the Floodplain Board, the consultant who is judged to have submitted the most advantageous technical and pricing proposal will be selected by the selection committee. The RFP announcement for professional Architecture & Engineering (A&E) services has been advertised and will be evaluated in accordance with CFR §200.317 and A.R.S. §41-2578.

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Upon consultant selection a Professional Services Contract will be brought before the FCD Board for approval. The grant timeline is 18 months maximum and begins when the FCD Board accepts the grant. Procurement anticipates completing the procurement of the consultant by the end of March.

Fiscal Impacts: The \$500,000 reimbursable grant from NRCS will be paid from Cochise County Flood Control District Professional Services funds and reimbursed from NRCS at approved milestones during the project. The matching in-kind County contribution costs of up to \$100,000 will be staff time for tasks required for grant submittals, reviews and coordination with NRCS and the consultant. There is no cash match required or proposed.

Funding Source:	\$500,000	258-4100-4103 332.100
	\$100,000 (no cash match)	tracked on a time and effort log

Next Steps/Action Items/Follow Up: Approved and signed grant agreement will be returned to the USDA-NRCS for their signature and the consultant procurement will be completed, a contract will be brought before the FCD Board for approval and work will begin on the watershed plan, environmental assessment and design work.

Impact of Not Approving: If not approved, the FCD will not receive \$500,000 in USDA-NRCS grant funding. The project will be placed on hiatus until other funding alternatives can be acquired, be it through Cochise County or other grant opportunities.