



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: Agricultural
Commissioner's Office
Department No.: 051
For Agenda Of: August 14, 2012
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Tme:
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Department Cathy Fisher, Agricultural Commissioner, 934-6200
Director(s)
Contact Info: David Chang, Agricultural Program Specialist, Agricultural
Commissioner's Office, 681-5600

SUBJECT: **Riparian noxious weed control county-wide**

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: Select_Concurrence

Other Concurrence: Select_Other

As to form: Select_Concurrence

Recommended Actions:

That the Board:

- (1) Make the required CEQA findings for the Santa Ynez River Tamarisk and Arundo Project. Districts 3 and 4.
- (2) Adopt the Project's Mitigated Negative Declaration, and adopt the mitigation monitoring program contained in the conditions of approval. Districts 3 and 4.
- (3) Authorize staff to execute the Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement with the California Dept of Fish and Game (all districts), and provide public notice of the Project as set forth in the Notice of Treatment and Newsletter. Districts 3 and 4.

Summary Text:

The Agricultural Commissioner proposes to use herbicides to remove the California Code of Regulations Section 4500 listed noxious weeds, *Arundo donax* and *Tamarix ramosissima*, from the riparian corridor of the Santa Ynez River, and *Arundo donax* from the riparian corridors of Rincon Creek, Arroyo Burro Creek, and Carpinteria Creek. The benefits of the projects include water quality, flood control, resource management, water conservation and beneficial uses of water for farming and recreation.

The Santa Barbara County Agricultural Commissioner's Office prepared a Mitigated Negative Declaration, (MND) (Attachment B) for the Santa Ynez River Tamarisk and Arundo Project (SYRTAP). The department has surveyed and defined the extent of *Arundo donax* and *Tamarix ramosissima* within the riparian system of the Santa Ynez River from Gibraltar Reservoir to the eastern border of VAFB.

Because of the wide scope of the project, the department conducted an initial study and completed a mitigated negative declaration.

Because funding is not complete for the entire project, the Santa Ynez River Tamarisk and Arundo Project is being implemented in phases. We are starting with the implementation of the treatment of *Arundo donax* along the Santa Ynez River (Phase 1). The treatment of *Tamarix ramosissima* (Phase 2) will not be implemented until additional funding is obtained.

The Board is requested to adopt the Agricultural Commissioner's staff determination that with mitigations, the impact of the Santa Ynez River Tamarisk and Arundo Project is less than significant, by making the required CEQA findings specified in Attachment A and by signing the MND's Notice of Determination included in Attachment B.

Riparian vegetation control requires permitting by the California Department of Fish and Game per Section 1602 of the California Fish and Game Code. The Agricultural Commissioner applied for and obtained a County-wide 1600 Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement (LSAA) (Attachment C).

The Board is requested to approve the Agricultural Commissioner's execution of the Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement (Attachment C).

The Agricultural Commissioner is preparing to implement the Santa Ynez River Tamarisk and Arundo Project by sending a Notice of Treatment (Attachment D) to owners of infested properties. Owners and tenants of properties that are adjacent to the Santa Ynez River, including owners receiving the Notice of Treatment, will be sent the Newsletter about the project (Attachment E).

Background:

The increasing spread of noxious weeds, including tamarisk and arundo is a pressing concern throughout Santa Barbara County, particularly as it relates to water conservation, habitat quality, plant and wildlife biodiversity, and infrastructure protection. *Arundo donax* and *Tamarix ramosissima* are detrimental to native habitat and water conservation and increase the risk of flooding, fire, and erosion in riparian systems. *Arundo donax* and *Tamarix ramosissima* displace native plants, degrade habitat, reduce biodiversity, negatively impact water quality and reduce water availability.

The Santa Ynez River has regional significance as one of the major rivers in the county, serving as a source of water and recreation for county citizens, and as habitat for a number of listed fish and bird species, and is designated as a Critical Coastal Area (CCA). *Arundo donax* treatments are also planned or are continuing in Rincon Creek, Arroyo Burro Creek, and Carpinteria Creek.

Pursuant to the authority established in the California Food and Agriculture Code and the California Code of Regulations, the Agricultural Commissioner is exercising its authority to eradicate the noxious weeds *Arundo donax* and *Tamarix ramosissima* in the riparian corridor of the Santa Ynez River; begin eradication of *Arundo donax* in Rincon Creek; and continue with the eradication of *Arundo donax* in Carpinteria Creek and Arroyo Burro Creek.

The project is funded by grants administered by the State Water Resources Control Board's (SWRCB) Proposition 50, the California Department of Fish and Game, the County of Santa Barbara's Coastal Resources Enhancement Fund, and the Coastal Impact Assistance Program.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Budgeted: No

Fiscal Analysis:

<u>Funding Sources</u>	<u>Current FY Cost:</u>	<u>Annualized On-going Cost:</u>	<u>Total One-Time Project Cost</u>
General Fund			
State			
Federal			
Fees			
Other:			
Total	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

Narrative: The projects are funded by various grants. Funds will be passed through to vendors that will implement the project.

Staffing Impacts:

Legal Positions:

FTEs:

Special Instructions:

- Board Chair to sign Notice of Determination.
- Please retain the original signed Notice of Determination for filing with the Clerk of the Board for CEQA purposes. David Chang will work with the Clerk of the Board to pay filing fees. An extra Notice of Determination is provided if an original signed copy is needed for Board documentation.
- Please provide a copy of the signed Notice of Determination to David Chang.
- Please provide a minute order to David Chang.

Attachments:

- Attachment A – CEQA Findings
- Attachment B – SYRTAP Notice of Determination and Mitigated Negative Declaration
- Attachment C – CDFG 1600 Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement
- Attachment D – SYRTAP Notice of Treatment
- Attachment E – SYRTAP Newsletter

Authored by: David Chang, Agricultural Commissioner's Office, (805) 681-5600, dchang@co.santa-barbara.ca.us

cc: