

**SANTA BARBARA COUNTY  
BOARD AGENDA LETTER**



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

**Agenda Number:**  
**Prepared on:** 4/7/06  
**Department Name:** Public Works  
**Department No.:** 054  
**Agenda Date:** 6/6/06  
**Placement:** Administrative  
**Estimate Time:**  
**Continued Item:** NO  
**If Yes, date from:**

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**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Phillip M. Demery, Director, ext. 3010  
Public Works Department

**STAFF CONTACT:** Mark Schleich, Deputy Director, ext. 3603

**SUBJECT:** Baron Ranch Management Contract  
Third Supervisorial District

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**Recommendation(s):**

That the Board of Supervisors:

- A. Approve and execute Amendment No. 2 to the Contract with Ag Land Services for management of the Baron Ranch, extending the contract for a period of two years from July 1, 2006 to June 30, 2008, in the amount of \$374,000 for a total contract in the amount of \$1,024,400.

**Alignment with Board Strategic Plan:**

The Recommendations are primarily aligned with a safe and healthy community in which to live, work, and visit.

**Executive Summary and Discussion:**

The County purchased the Baron Ranch in 1991 primarily to serve as a buffer to the Tajiguas Landfill, located in the canyon immediately to the west of Baron Ranch. Located approximately 30 miles west of Santa Barbara, Baron Ranch is a working avocado and cherimoya ranch. The County has managed the property with the following long-range goals in mind; maximizing net-revenue to offset the cost, maximizing long-term agricultural productivity, and incorporating agricultural best management practices.

In March 1997 the County went through a competitive process to identify a qualified agricultural management company to manage the Ranch. Ag Land Services was identified as the most qualified applicant, and in May 1997 the County entered into a one-year contract with Ag Land Services for management of the property. That initial contract was amended in June 1998 for two years, and again in

June 2000 for an additional two years. At that time, your Board directed staff to put the management contract back out to bid in Spring 2002.

In March 2002, a Request For Proposals was sent to some 17 potential management firms. Three proposals were received in response, and a review panel consisting of Public Works (Solid Waste), and General Services (Real Property) staff, and Mr. George Goodall, a retired UC cooperative farm advisor with 40 years of experience in avocado and semi-tropical fruit, reviewed and evaluated the proposals. Criteria included prior experience managing avocado and cherimoya, including pollination, pruning and fertilization, management of irrigation systems, experience with weed and pest management, experience with long-term ranch management planning, the harvesting and marketing of avocado and cherimoya, cost control, utilization of best management practices, and favorable references. Based on the results of the review, staff recommended that the County renew its contract with Ag Land Services. Your Board endorsed that recommendation on June 25, 2002. Staff is now recommending that the second of two possible two-year contract extensions be approved, for a total contract term of July 1, 2002 to June 30, 2008.

This amendment provides provisions for all cultural costs related to the avocado and cherimoya orchards, including irrigation maintenance, parts and supervision, fertilization, pruning and thinning of the groves, weed and rodent control, erosion control measures, road maintenance, and coordination and supervision of harvesting for the two-year period FY 2006/2007 – 2007/2008.

At the March 21, 2006 Board hearing, your Board directed staff to initiate the process to declare 140 acres of Baron Ranch as surplus to County needs, with the ultimate intent of placing the designated acreage for sale on the market, should another public agency not express an interest in acquiring the surplus land. At that same hearing, your Board also directed staff to develop a plan to establish a public trails system at Baron Ranch. The proposed extension of Ag Land Service’s contract which is before you today, will not significantly affect either of those two Board directives, and will ensure that the groves continue to be properly managed through the process to sell off surplus land and work out the details of providing public access to the ranch.

**Mandates and Service Levels:**

No change in programs or service level are anticipated at this time.

**Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:**

Contract amount is not to exceed \$374,000 for the two-year amendment. The increase over the prior two-year period (FY 2002/03 – FY 2003/04) is due to an increase in management fees, equipment & materials. Crop revenue for the period FY 2006/07 to FY 2007/08 is projected to be approximately \$700,000.00 and will be used to offset the cost of management.

Budget Year	Management Contract
2002/03	\$144,000.00
2003/04	\$158,400.00
2004/05	\$169,500.00
2005/06	\$178,500.00
2006/07	\$184,000.00
2007/08	\$190,000.00
Total	\$1,024,400.00

**Special Instructions:**

Please provide the minute order, a signed and dated copy of the Amendment and the second original copy of the Amendment, if approved, to the Public Works Department, Resource Recovery and Waste Management Division, attention Everett King.

**Concurrence**

Auditor-Controller, County Counsel, and Risk Manager.

**Board letter authored by:** Everett H. King, Senior Program Specialist