



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

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

Agenda Number:

Submitted on:
(COB Stamp)

Department Name: PW/Flood Control
Department No.: 054
Agenda Date: April 21, 2026
Placement: Administrative Agenda
Estimated Time:
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from: N/A
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Directors, Flood Control and Water Conservation District
FROM: Department Director: Chris Sneddon, Public Works Director
Contact: Matt Griffin, Engineering Manager – Flood Control
SUBJECT: License Agreement – La Pita Place Drainage & Erosion Control Project, Third Supervisorial District

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: Risk Management

As to form: Yes

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Directors:

- a) Approve and authorize the Public Works Director or designee to execute the License Agreement – La Pita Place Drainage & Erosion Control Project (Attachment A) with Buellton Ranch L.P. for the maintenance of drainage improvements and infrastructure on private property for flood control purposes for a term of ten years; and
- b) Determine that executing a License Agreement is an organizational and administrative activity that will not result in changes in the environment, and therefore the action does not constitute a “Project” within the meaning of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(5).

Summary Text:

This item is on the agenda to approve and delegate the authority to the Public Works Director or designee to execute a License Agreement with Buellton Ranch L.P. to grant formal access rights to the Flood Control District (District) for the maintenance and operations of the La Pita Place Drainage & Erosion Control Project.

Discussion:

In 1994, following the 1993 Marre Fire, the Board of Directors entered into an agreement with the Soil Conservation Service (now the Natural Resources Conservation Service) to construct the La Pita Place Drainage & Erosion Control Project as part of an Emergency Watershed Protection effort. Construction on the subject property was completed under a Temporary Entry Permit granted by the property owner.

However, no perpetual or long term property rights were ever formally conveyed to the Flood Control District for access or maintenance of the improvements. Since construction, the District has performed annual maintenance under an informal “handshake” arrangement with the property owner. The lack of a formal agreement has occasionally created coordination challenges with the tenant farmer.

Ongoing maintenance of these improvements is in the District’s best interest, as they protect and support the District owned Buellton Basins Retention system. Establishing a formal License Agreement with the property owner will secure access and maintenance rights for a ten-year term and strengthen coordination with the tenant farmer moving forward.

Background:

The Buellton Basins retention system, located within the City of Buellton and constructed in the early 1980s, receives stormwater runoff from the License Agreement subject property (APN 099-400-068) situated in unincorporated County. This system provides important flood protection for the neighborhood north of Highway 246 and west of Avenue of Flags.

The basins are vulnerable to significant sediment deposition caused by erosion originating on the subject property. The La Pita Place Drainage & Erosion Control Project was constructed to mitigate these impacts and has performed effectively over the years. However, the project requires annual maintenance to ensure continued functionality. Maintenance activities for the Buellton Basins and associated drainage facilities are included in the Flood Control District’s Annual Routine Maintenance Program and Notice of Exemption (NOE) for existing facilities, presented and posted by the Clerk of the Board on July 17, 2025.

The proposed action is the execution of a License Agreement that will allow the District to continue performing the maintenance activities described in the NOE.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Budgeted: Yes

Fiscal Analysis:

There are no fiscal impacts associated with the recommended actions. The District will continue to maintain these Flood Control facilities using existing maintenance funds currently budgeted.

No General Fund monies will be utilized for work associated with these actions.

Special Instructions:

Direct the Clerk of the Board to send a copy of the minute order of these actions to clopez@countyofsb.org.

Attachment:

Attachment A – Copy of License Agreement – La Pita Place Drainage & Erosion Control Project

Attachment B – Copy of CEQA Notice of Exemption

Contact Information:

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