



ACTION ITEM

Contract with the University of California, Davis to Fund *San Francisco Estuary & Watershed Science (SFEWS)*

Summary: *San Francisco Estuary and Watershed Science (SFEWS)* is the only open-access journal focused on science for water and ecosystems in the Estuary and its watershed. Staff recommends that the Council support the biennial renewal of the contract with UC Davis to fund the *SFEWS* publication.

Requested Action

Authorize the Executive Officer to enter into a new two-year contract with UC Davis to provide a total of \$884,394 for the continued publication of the *SFEWS* online journal from July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2022, and to make additional amendments as necessary.

The Executive Officer has delegated authority up to \$500,000 to enter into contracts and interagency agreements on the Council's behalf. As this contract exceeds that amount, it requires Council authorization.

Background

As identified in the Delta Reform Act, "the mission of the Delta Science Program is to provide the best possible scientific information for water and environmental decision making in the Bay-Delta system." The Delta Science Program fulfills this mission in part through funding research and facilitating science communication, including the peer-reviewed publication of research findings in *SFEWS*.

SFEWS is a major outlet for peer-reviewed content of recent scientific findings for the Delta and Bay. Numerous *SFEWS* articles are cited in the influential National Academy of Sciences book, *Sustainable Water and Environmental Management in the California Bay-Delta*. The relevance of *SFEWS* to regional policy also has grown as evidenced by citations supporting water management regulations (Luoma and Muscatine, 2019).

One of the most popular features of the journal are policy-relevant short essays aimed at decision-makers. This year the journal launched a new feature to reach non-scientists through *Estuary Pearls*, published by the San Francisco Estuary Partnership. After each issue of *SFEWS* is published, *Estuary Pearls* distributes an electronic newsletter with a summary of each paper that describes the findings of interest or value to the public.

Since the journal's inception in October 2003, page views and downloads have grown to over 11,000 per quarter, up from 800 when the journal was first published. *SFEWS* plans to maintain current publication rates, typically 20–30 papers per annual volume,

while working to increase journal access and expand readership in several ways consistent with rapidly changing technology:

- Publishing a special issue of the *State of Bay-Delta Science* (SBDS) in 2021;
- Encouraging grants and fellowships funded by the Council to submit research results to *SFEWS*;
- Encouraging synthesis papers, prepared as part of our joint science symposia with UC Davis, to be submitted to *SFEWS*;
- Promoting *SFEWS* through social media outlets and blogs and at local conferences and workshops;
- Using new digital tools that allow the scientific and management communities to more widely and reliably find the content that *SFEWS* publishes.

Fiscal Information

The publication of *SFEWS* is a shared effort of the Council, UC Davis, the California Digital Library (CDL), and the US Geological Survey (USGS) (Attachment 1). The Council provides direct financial contributions, while the CDL, UC Davis, USGS, and others provide in-kind services that represent approximately 36% (\$508,000) of the total costs of publication. In-kind services from the CDL include the journal's electronic publishing platform, direct web access to the journal, and IT support. UC Davis provides an independent, university-based "home" for the journal. The USGS supports computer and IT services for the Editor-in-Chief.

The proposed new contract has a total cost of \$884,394 from July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2022, or an average of \$442,197 per year. This amount is comparable to the cost of the current contract, with a modest (15%) increase to cover cost of living adjustments and a special issue for SBDS in 2021.

List of Attachments

Attachment 1: *San Francisco Estuary and Watershed Science* – Budget Summary

References

Luoma, S.N., and Muscatine, L.D. Dec 2019. Sixteen Years of San Francisco Estuary & Watershed Science: A Retrospective. *San Francisco Estuary and Watershed Science*.

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