



ACTION ITEM

Amendment to Contract #19124 with the Regents of the University of California San Diego, California Sea Grant for the Position of Social Scientist Extension Specialist

Summary

Council staff recommends approval of an amendment to contract #19124 with the Regents of the University of California, San Diego (UCSD), California Sea Grant (CASG), to extend the term by one year to expire on April 30, 2028, name key personnel, and refine the scope of work of the Social Scientist Extension Specialist. The need to extend the term is to allow more time for the next Extension Specialist to contribute meaningful social science research for the Delta. No additional funds would be added to the agreement as a result of this amendment.

Requested Action

Council staff requests that the Council approve Resolution 2025-07 granting authority to the Executive Officer to amend existing contract #19124 with UCSD, California Sea Grant, add the name of the Extension Specialist, and extend the term one year to expire April 30, 2028.

Background

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (Delta) is a complex socio-ecological system that requires greater investment in social science research, as illuminated by the Delta Independent Science Board's (ISB) "[Review of Research on the Delta as an Evolving Place](https://deltacouncil.ca.gov/pdf/isb/products/2017-05-18-isb-delta-as-a-place.pdf)," (<https://deltacouncil.ca.gov/pdf/isb/products/2017-05-18-isb-delta-as-a-place.pdf>) which called for a more significant role for social science in research in the Delta. The ISB review, in part, led to the creation of the Council's Social Science Task Force (2018), who identified key recommendations, including the need to build capacity for social science within the Council. In alignment with these two reports, the Council recognized the value of incorporating social science into Delta water management and policy. Council staff has expertise in the biophysical sciences, but

focusing on the Delta's biophysical components alone is insufficient to understand and manage such a system. As such, the Council has entered into an agreement with CASG for the specialized services of a Social Scientist Extension Specialist.

First executed in 2020, the key objectives of the Social Scientist Extension Specialist position are to assist with research and outreach on the human dimensions of water and environmental management and policy in the Delta. The goals of the position are to build social science capacity, assist Council staff on social science initiatives, and conduct social science research pertaining to water issues in the Delta.

Information about the Topic

The CASG hiring process has taken long-than-expected, requiring a one-year extension of the contract. The new Extension Specialist will be Tara Pozzi, who will be officially announced when she starts in August 2025.

Social Scientist Extension Specialist: Contributions to Date

The prior services of the Social Science Extension Specialist have made significant contributions to the Council's work across a broad range of activities within the Council and the wider Delta community, including:

- supporting the Council's internal Social Science Integration Team and the Bay-Delta Social Science Community of Practice;
- facilitating training in social science methods for Council staff;
- contributing to Delta as an Evolving Place efforts through regular community engagement, interviews, focus groups, and field visits, and establishing the first Delta Residents' Survey in collaboration with California State University Sacramento's Institute for Social Research;
- leading research efforts informing the Council's Tribal and Environmental Justice Issue Paper, advising staff on the development and drafting of the paper, and mentoring;
- serving as technical lead for the agriculture portion of Delta Adapts, doing extensive outreach with agriculture stakeholders and landowners; and
- serving on the editorial board for the 2024 State of Bay-Delta Science, and as a contributing author on the governance chapter.

Purpose of Contract Amendment

This amendment would extend the term of the agreement by one year to expire on April 30, 2028, name key personnel, and adjust the budget and scope to support the new Extension Specialist beginning their work in early August 2025.

Fiscal Information

Not applicable.

List of Attachments

Not applicable.

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