



MEMO

Submitted by: Judy Kelly, Director
San Francisco Estuary Partnership

Subject: Executive Board Approval for Contract with State Water Resources
Control Board for Hicks Flat Mercury Remediation Project, Guadalupe
Creek, Santa Clara County

Date: January 6, 2010

Executive Summary

The San Francisco Estuary Partnership (SFEP) partnered with the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (District) to apply for an EPA 319(h) grant for the Hicks Flat Mercury Remediation project to be administered by the State Water Resources Control Board. The project received an award notice in April 2009 and we are beginning the grant agreement negotiation process. The project proposes to remediate an estimated 2700 cubic yards of mercury mining waste rock at Hicks Flat located in the Rancho de Guadalupe area of the District's Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve. The Midpeninsula Open Space District acquired the Rancho de Guadalupe property in 1995. This particular property lies within the New Almaden Mercury Mining District and was historically used as a waste rock disposal area for the Guadalupe Mines. During the fill disposal operations, material was deposited directly adjacent to an intermittent tributary to Guadalupe Creek and over-steepened banks were created that have since failed into the Cherry Springs Creek tributary. The Site is sparsely vegetated and physical transport through erosion and natural dispersion of fine sediment is the primary mechanism delivering waste rock material to the creek. Contaminant investigations conducted between 1990 and 1995 collected a total of 30 surface soil samples from the Site and six sediment samples from Cherry Springs Creek. Results from these studies indicate that the mining waste rock at the Site contains elevated levels of total mercury. The District is proposing to retain a qualified project team of environmental and civil engineers, restoration scientists and erosion control specialists to design the final remedy, implement construction activities, and conduct monitoring at the Site.

Recommended Action

Authorization is requested for the Executive Director or designee to enter into a new contract on behalf of ABAG/SFEP with the State Water Resources Control Board to implement the Hicks Flat Mercury Remediation Project. The grant agreement will not exceed \$ 420,000 including match/in-kind funds of \$105,000 from ABAG (\$7,500) and the District (\$97,500). The term will be 3 years from agreement execution. This project serves as implementation of the SFEP's Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP).

Next Steps

Upon authorization and completion of grant agreement negotiations, ABAG will execute a new agreement with the State Water Resources Control Board.