



**Contra
Costa
County**

To: Board of Supervisors
From: Anna Roth, Health Services Director
Date: December 8, 2020

Subject: Approval to Adopt Grant Application #28-942 to the California Department of Pesticide Regulation—Research Grants Program

RECOMMENDATION(S):

ADOPT Resolution No. 2020/326 authorizing the Health Services Director, or designee, to submit a grant application to the California Department of Pesticide Regulation – Research Grants Program, in an amount not to exceed \$330,542 to produce field research that will help reduce the reliance on anticoagulant rodenticides for the management of ground squirrels near critical infrastructure in Contra Costa County and throughout California for the period from July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2024.

FISCAL IMPACT:

No County match is required.

BACKGROUND:

In 2019, the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Advisory Committee formally recommended that the Board of Supervisors “Encourage County operations to continue to evaluate new and existing weed and ground squirrel management tactics, considering site requirements, efficacy, cost, impacts to the environment, and impacts to the community.” During an extensive review of the County’s ground squirrel management program, the IPM

☒ APPROVE

☐ OTHER

☒ RECOMMENDATION OF CNTY

☐ RECOMMENDATION OF BOARD

ADMINISTRATOR

COMMITTEE

Action of Board On: **12/08/2020** ☒ APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED ☐ OTHER

Clerks Notes:

VOTE OF SUPERVISORS

AYE: John Gioia, District I Supervisor
Candace Andersen, District II Supervisor
Diane Burgis, District III Supervisor
Karen Mitchoff, District IV Supervisor
Federal D. Glover, District V Supervisor

I hereby certify that this is a true and correct copy of an action taken and entered on the minutes of the Board of Supervisors on the date shown.

ATTESTED: December 8, 2020

David Twa, County Administrator and Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

By: June McHuen, Deputy

Contact: Wade Finlinson,
925-655-3214

Advisory Committee discovered an exclusive reliance on Diphacinoo-treated grain bait, which is inconsistent with the County IPM Policy. First generation

BACKGROUND: (CONT'D)

anticoagulant rodenticides may remain a part of an integrated program in perpetuity at certain locations where alternatives are not feasible. However, tolerance levels and site conditions at other locations may be conducive to different control methods. In 2019, the Contra Costa County Integrated Pest Management Advisory Committee developed Decision Documentation for Ground Squirrel Management on Critical Infrastructure. That document made several recommendations that encouraged further investigation and experimentation of alternative tactics such as carbon monoxide injection, grouting, and raptor perches. Carbon dioxide injection, live trapping, and other methods will also be explored as part of this project.

The two primary objectives include the development of highly accurate pest population surveillance systems and the implementation of integrated control tactics appropriate to specific site conditions. In terms of refining pest monitoring strategies, the County plans to develop methods that incorporate disparate tools to pinpoint problematic areas. Geographic information system (GIS) and unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) technology already being used for other applications throughout the County will be studied to determine the replicability of the strategies on a broader scale. This project will map pest pressures and be monitored alongside existing GIS layers that depict areas most susceptible to damage caused by ground squirrel burrows. Burrows in the selected study areas will be manually surveyed and mapped using global navigation satellite system (GNSS) receivers, allowing for the documentation of pest pressure changes over time.

A pilot study of each proposed control tactic will be designed, matched to appropriate study areas, and executed in a manner that is practically useful and academically valid. Tactics to be studied include carbon monoxide injection, grouting, raptor perches, carbon dioxide injection, live trapping, and other methods. It is anticipated that each control tactic study will be selected as a result of the initial monitoring activities. Moreover, ongoing monitoring will measure the efficacy and cost of each tactic to inform the feasibility of further implementation at other County sites as well as similar locations throughout the state. Adjacent public agencies in the Bay Area have also expressed an interest in hosting similar pilot studies as part of this project.

The IPM Program is positioned to take the lead in this pursuit and be the primary beneficiary of the research conducted primarily on County property. County residents and visitors who utilize public roadways, facilities, and open space, or those who are protected by flood control infrastructure or who otherwise benefit from ecosystem services provided by California wildlife are the most important stakeholders. Other primary stakeholders include land managers in Contra Costa County and other participating public agencies. Public servants who are stewards of California's critical infrastructure and public lands who may later adopt principles clarified as a result of this project also have a significant stake in this research.

Private service providers are also primary stakeholders in the outcome of this project.

Public agencies are increasingly relying upon the contracting community and this effort will solidify model contract specifications, if funded. Each control tactic studied as part of this project will be administered by local businesses or sole proprietors within a valid framework overseen by the project team. One assumption of this undertaking is that there currently is an insufficient number of professionals in the private sector that are equipped to perform the alternative tactics listed. This research aspires to promote capacity building of current pest control operators and strengthen employment training endeavors in each community.

CONSEQUENCE OF NEGATIVE ACTION:

If staff is not authorized to submit applications, grant funding will not be available, which would delay efforts to implement the IPM Policy as it pertains to the managing ground squirrels near critical infrastructure.

ATTACHMENTS

Resolution 2020/326