



Legislation Text

File #: 16-377, **Version:** 1

AUTHORIZATION TO ENTER INTO A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN NATIONAL FOREST FOUNDATION AND THE CITY OF GLENDALE

Staff Contact: Craig Johnson, P.E., Director, Water Services

Purpose and Recommended Action

This is a request for City Council to authorize the City Manager to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with National Forest Foundation (NFF) to support the forest and watershed health initiative and approve the expenditure of funds to the Northern Arizona Forest Fund (NAFF) conservation program in the amount not to exceed \$75,000.

Background

Approximately 40% of the City's water supply is provided by Salt River Project (SRP) from the Salt and Verde River watersheds. SRP's surface water supply originates from Northern Arizona watersheds within the Coconino, Kaibab, Prescott, Apache-Sitgreaves, and Tonto National Forests. Maintaining healthy Salt and Verde River watersheds by funding restoration and management projects is vital to the long-term supply of SRP water that Glendale receives.

The health of these forests has been continually deteriorating due to past management practices. The unthinned northern Arizona forests have resulted in catastrophic wildfires that have destroyed over 2 million acres. The devastating impacts of these fires include uncontrolled runoff and added silt and debris to the water supply. The monetary costs associated with a fire event include higher treatment costs to remove additional sediment and increased chemical costs to treat poor quality water. The current conditions of these forests in conjunction with the ongoing drought are threats to Glendale's SRP surface water supply.

SRP and the NFF have developed the NAFF in an effort to restore the watersheds back to a healthy condition through local partnerships with water providers, businesses, and residents. The Cities of Phoenix and Scottsdale currently have active MOU's that fund NAFF projects. The projects are high priority restoration projects that the US Forest Service lacks the funding resources to implement. These projects include: forest thinning and prescribed burning, stream and wetland restoration, sediment and erosion management, and habitat improvement and re-vegetation.

Analysis

The NAFF's projects that will be funded by this agreement will reduce wildfire risks, improve streams and wetlands, enhance wildlife habitat, restore native plants, and limit erosion and sediment deposition into Arizona streams, rivers, and reservoirs. These projects will benefit both the sustainability and quality of the water resource in order to best serve the citizens of Glendale.

This action by City Council will authorize the MOU supporting the forest and watershed health initiative between NFF and the City of Glendale regarding the conservation program investment the City will be making in the NAFF over three years and approve the expenditure of funds.

Upon approval of the MOU, the City will make the FY2016-17 payment of \$25,000. If approved by City Council, additional annual payments contributions of \$25,000 will be made for FY2017-18 and FY2018-19.

Community Benefit/Public Involvement

Investing in “green infrastructure” or forest management, by proactively managing and restoring the watersheds, reduces catastrophic wildfires which results in positive impacts to the water supply.

The City will have the opportunity to develop marketing materials that communicate our partnership with NFF to our customers and citizens. Employees and possibly citizens will be offered opportunities to participate in stewardship activities associated with the NFF.

Budget and Financial Impacts

Funds are available in the Water Services FY2016-17 operating budget. Future payments will be contingent on budget appropriation.

Cost	Fund-Department-Account
\$25,000	2400-17230-518200, Professional and Contractual

Capital Expense? No

Budgeted? Yes

Requesting Budget or Appropriation Transfer? No

If yes, where will the transfer be taken from?