

Northern Nevada Water Planning Commission

STAFF REPORT

DATE: December 26, 2019
TO: Chairman and Members, Northern Nevada Water Planning Commission
FROM: Jim Smitherman, Water Resources Program Manager
SUBJECT: Review and possible recommendation to the WRWC to approve a Second Amendment to the Agreement with Data Instincts to assist and provide guidance in the development of outreach strategies, messages, materials and information dissemination methods related to regional effluent management planning, at no additional cost to extend the term of the agreement through December 2020; and possible direction to staff

SUMMARY

In February 2018, the Northern Nevada Water Planning Commission (“NNWPC”) approved a recommendation and funding, in an amount not to exceed \$25,000 from the RWMF to retain Data Instincts to assist and provide guidance in the development of outreach strategies, messages, materials and information dissemination methods related to regional effluent management planning, and authorized the NNWPC Water Resources Program Manager to execute an Agreement with Data Instincts for the Project. The Agreement was executed to provide for timely initiation of the first phase of assistance, to be followed by a proposal to the NNWPC for a second phase of the Project, for possible recommendation to the WRWC.

The NNWPC, at its October 3, 2018 meeting, made a recommendation to the WRWC for approval of a scope of work, and funding in an amount not to exceed \$100,000 from the RWMF, for the second phase of the Project.

Data Instincts has been performing well relative to the phase two scope of work and direction from staff. Much of the hands-on technical work has been performed by agency staff, which has resulted in the project being under budget to the extent that Data Instinct’s work can continue through 2020 with little or no additional funding.

BACKGROUND

In April 2016, the Regional Effluent Management Team (the "Team") presented a report on the development of a phased feasibility program to demonstrate treatment technologies and evaluate whether advanced treatment of effluent and groundwater replenishment offers long-term regional benefits. Program elements include community outreach, State regulatory framework, treatment technology, pilot testing, hydrologic investigations and field-scale demonstration projects.

Recommendations from the Water Research Foundation’s Independent Advisory Panel, which is advising and assisting the Team and other local agency staff to implement the various phases of the feasibility program, include early implementation of a multi-phase outreach program initially targeting internal agency staff and elected decision-makers, then progressing to customers,

interest groups, media, and the general public. This approach has proven effective in similar feasibility studies elsewhere in the United States.

With the implementation of the feasibility program underway, the Team identified consultant assistance concerning communication and outreach as a near-term requirement and priority. The Team determined that Data Instincts was, and is, uniquely qualified because of its extensive experience with similar efforts in California and other states. In addition, the firm's principal, Mr. Mark Millan, is a member of the Independent Advisory Panel that is providing advice and assistance to the Team and staff, as indicated above.

The Team, consisting of technical staff from the City of Reno, the City of Sparks, Washoe County and the Truckee Meadows Water Authority, has been meeting since April 2014 to discuss regional effluent management issues. In 2016, the development and initiation of the feasibility program marked a significant step forward in regional effluent management. Since then, staff and Team members have provided reports from time to time to keep the NNWPC and WRWC apprised of progress, and to request funding for feasibility program activities such as the Data Instincts project.

FISCAL IMPACT

None

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the NNWPC make a recommendation to the WRWC to approve and execute a Second Amendment to the Agreement with Data Instincts to assist and provide guidance in the development of outreach strategies, messages, materials and information dissemination methods related to regional effluent management planning, at no additional cost to extend the term of the agreement through December 2020.

JS:jp