County of El Dorado

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Legislation Details (With Text)

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File created:	10/22/2019	**In control:**	Board of Supervisors
On agenda:	12/10/2019	**Final action:**	12/10/2019

Title: Planning and Building Department, Long Range Planning, recommending the Board:
1) Find that the use of Ecological Preserve Endowment Funds to pay for the preparation of the Immediate Needs Assessment and Management Plan, as well to pay for the first year operations and management tasks for the three properties, is consistent with the El Dorado County General Plan, pursuant to Government Code Section 65402 and Chapter 130.71 (Ecological Preserve Fee) of the County Ordinance Code;
2) Authorize the Director of Planning and Building to allocate Ecological Preserve Endowment Funds to pay for the preparation of an Immediate Needs Assessment (to define first year estimated operations and management costs) and a Management Plan for three properties previously acquired by the County to be added to the Pine Hill Preserve, Cameron Park Unit:
a) Detmold property (APN 070-261-082);
b) Scariot-DeWolf property (APN 109-230-012); and
c) Carriage Hills property (APNs: 070-261-077,-079,-080, and -081); and
3) Authorize the Planning and Building Director to allocate Ecological Preserve Endowment Funds in the not-to-exceed amount of $194,000 to perform any specialized cleanup and maintenance work included in the first year operations and management program that might be required by the Immediate Needs Assessment.

FUNDING: Ecological Preserve Endowment Fund.

Sponsors:

Indexes:

Code sections:

Attachments: 1. A - PHP Mgmt Plan BOS Staff Memo 11-19-19 Accepted_MN_KW, 2. B - Exhibits A - F, 3. Public Comment BOS Rcvd 12-6-19

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
12/10/2019	1	Board of Supervisors	Approved	Pass

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FUNDING: Ecological Preserve Endowment Fund.

DISCUSSION / BACKGROUND

The County maintains two separate funds for fees collected on building permits for the rare plant ecological preserve (pursuant to Title 130, Article 7, Chapter 130.71 - Ecological Preserve Fee), of the County Code of Ordinances. The Special Revenue Fund is used only for land acquisitions. The Endowment Fund is used for the operation and maintenance of the Preserve.

The three properties to be added to the Pine Hill Preserve were acquired previously by the County for purposes of long-term management and protection by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), as well as on-going mitigation for impacts to the Gabbro Soils.

The County has contracted with Sycamore Environmental Consultants, Inc. (Consultant) to develop the Immediate Needs Assessment and the Management Plan for a not-to-exceed amount of $62,000.

Immediate Needs Assessment

An Immediate Needs Assessment will be prepared by the Consultant to identify near term management activities to be executed the first year, or until the property is officially transferred to the BLM to protect the properties from illegal trespass, especially from off-road vehicles and transients. Reducing on-going disturbances will allow the parcels to be preserved in a better condition ahead of the official incorporation into the Pine Hill Preserve system to be managed by BLM. The BLM will assume management responsibilities once the property is officially incorporated into the Pine Hill Preserve system.

The cost of first year preliminary operations and management costs for these three properties, comprising 80 acres, is estimated to not exceed $194,000, and will include (but will not be limited to) the following tasks: individual property boundary surveys, low cost access protection (logs, boulders, fencing), security patrols, erosion control and fuel management for the three properties. The Consultant will refine and confirm preliminary estimated first year start-up costs with BLM.

Management Plan

The County acquired these three properties over the past ten years with the intent that they become part of the Pine Hill Preserve as soon as possible. The BLM intends to update the overall existing Pine Hill Preserve Management Plan in 2020, and has requested the County prepare a management plan for the three parcels prior to incorporation into the Preserve. The County's Management Plan for the three properties may become an appendix in the overall Pine Hill Preserve Management Plan, and will have chapters covering ecological background, existing biological resources, public access, fire safety, restoration and erosion abatement, education and outreach, and estimated start-up costs and endowment.

The Board is responsible for approving the release of funds for various rare plant related expenditures. Staff is requesting that the Ecological Preserve Endowment Fund be used to pay for the Immediate Needs Assessment, Management Plan and first year Operations and Management program. As of October 8, 2019, the fund has a balance of $3,730,732.

ALTERNATIVES

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The Board could decide not to approve this item to allocate the Ecological Preserve Endowment Funds. However, this would delay the acceptance of the properties into the Pine Hill Preserve resulting in increased maintenance costs and may jeopardize the protection of the rare plants. Additional expenses may impact the General Fund.

PRIOR BOARD ACTION

The three properties to be added to the Pine Hill Preserve were acquired previously by the County for purposes of long-term management and protection by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), as well as on-going mitigation for impacts to the Gabbro Soils. The 20.11 acre Carriage Hills property acquisition was approved by the Board January 26, 2010 (Legistar 10-0056); the 8.93 acre Detmold property acquisition was approved by the Board on November 9, 2010 (Legistar 10-1206); and the 51.12 acre Scariot-DeWolf property acquisition was approved by the Board on July 17, 2018 (Legistar 18-0941).

On April 10, 2018 Supervisor Ranalli recommended that the Rare Plant Endowment Funds be used for specialized cleanup and/or maintenance for the approximately 30 acres of County-owned land (Carriage Hills and Detmold properties) near Palmer Drive and Loma Drive, with a not-to-exceed amount of $20,000. This request was approved on April 10, 2018 (Legistar 18-0562) and clean-up efforts were successfully implemented, but continue to reoccur.

OTHER DEPARTMENT / AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

Department of Transportation, County Counsel, Environmental Management, Chief Administrative Office, CAL FIRE, and the BLM

CAO RECOMMENDATION / COMMENTS

It is recommended that the Board approve this item.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no Net County Cost associated with this item. Ecological Preserve Endowment Funds are collected as a fee associated with development projects in the area and are intended for maintenance and management of land within the Pine Hill Preserve. Sufficient appropriations exist in the FY 2019-20 Adopted Budget, and the department does not require a budget amendment.

CLERK OF THE BOARD FOLLOW UP ACTIONS

N/A

STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENT

Public Safety - effective management of these properties it will improve fire prevention and reduce transient occupancy of the property.
Good Governance - Implements interagency coordination to create, maintain and expand rare plant habitat and Preserve.

CONTACT

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Planning and Building Department