



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 18-1891, **Version:** 1

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Chief Administrative Office, Parks Division, recommending the Board consider the following:

- 1) Approve the addition of (1) Septic Pumper Trailer fixed asset to the Board-approved fixed asset list;
- 2) Authorize the attached budget transfer in the amount of \$25,000 (4/5 vote required);
- 3) Make findings in accordance with Section 3.12.160. of the El Dorado County Ordinance Code exempting the competitive bidding process due to the unique nature of the property or services required precludes competitive bidding;
- 4) Authorize the sole source acquisition of the fixed asset through WFO Concepts; and
- 5) Authorize the Purchasing Agent to issue a purchase order up to \$25,000, plus applicable taxes and fees.

**FUNDING:** State Off-Highway Vehicle (Green Sticker).

### **DISCUSSION / BACKGROUND**

El Dorado County Parks Division is requesting to purchase a Septic Pumper Trailer to service bathrooms on the Rubicon Trail. This request is being made for the following reasons:

- 1) The County is the responsible party based on the easement with the Forest Service and with the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board for the Rubicon Trail.
- 2) The County has installed several restrooms along the trail to abate water quality issues, and currently has a contract with The Rubicon Trail Foundation (RTF) to service the restrooms. However, as a volunteer organization, the service is not on a set schedule and has not always been available when needed.
- 3) The Parks Division was unsuccessful in locating a private company that is able or willing to service the bathrooms on the Rubicon Trail.

El Dorado County became aware of environmental issues on the Rubicon Trail in 2000. The Rubicon is in the watershed of the Upper American River Project (UARP) area. State Parks Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Commission, working with the Board of Supervisors, tasked the Parks Division with addressing the environmental concerns. The timeline below gives a brief overview of what has transpired with environmental issues on the Rubicon Trail and steps to rectify the issues:

- In 2004, the County closed Spider Lake because of sanitation issues.
- In 2008, El Dorado County installed a vault restroom at Loon Lake.
- On April 23, 2009, the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Water Board) issued a Cleanup and Abatement Order on the Rubicon Trail. This order had several issues that needed to be addressed: sanitation, sediment, education, maintenance and overall responsibility.
- In 2010, El Dorado County installed a vault restroom at Ellis Creek.
- In 2011, El Dorado County installed a 2,000 gallon septic tank to hold the waste from the restrooms on the trail.

- In 2012, Rubicon Trail Foundation (RTF) built a Unimog Pumper Truck to service the restrooms.
- In 2012, El Dorado County, with volunteers, installed 6 construction style restrooms at various locations on the trail.
- El Dorado County accepted an easement from the US Forest Service for the Rubicon Trail, thereby accepting responsibility for maintenance and sanitation.
- In 2013, three more restrooms were installed at Buck Island.
- In October 10, 2014, the County adopted a sanitation plan for the Rubicon, and the Water Board rescinded the Cleanup and Abatement Order.
- In 2018 another restroom was installed at Buck Island.

Since the portable restrooms were installed, they have been serviced through a contract with RTF, with funding through State Parks OHV Grants. The contract is on an as-needed basis and the work is performed by volunteers. In recent years, there have been concerns from the public and staff about the timing of pumping, especially prior to large events, and backup plan when RTF cannot provide services. In 2018, the RTF truck broke down just before Jeepers Jamboree and all the restroom units were full. Fortunately, the truck was repaired and the units were pumped just before the large event. This situation showed the availability issue of the volunteer organization and it revealed the need for a reliable backup plan. Because the County has no equipment of its own, if RTF is unable to pump the County has no way to meet the requirements of the sanitation plan.

To travel on the Rubicon Trail a vehicle must be built to handle the difficult and unique terrain. Staff has contacted several commercial septic haulers and the only vendor that services units of this size does not have equipment capable of navigating the Rubicon Trail. Staff also contacted several other septic haulers that pump only large vaults and they have no equipment capable to traverse the Rubicon. A pumper trailer owned and operated by the County would provide a backup plan for the 2019 season if the truck owned by RTF breaks down or if service is needed outside the service schedule.

WFO is an off-highway motor vehicle fabricator located in Auburn that is able to build a septic pumper trailer. This vendor has the experience building equipment and vehicles that can handle the terrain of the Rubicon and has done repairs on the RTF Unimog. This trailer will be very unique and at this time there is no trailer of this type. The fabricator has Rubicon experience regarding technical, mechanical, design and engineering needed to ensure that this trailer can withstand the trail conditions. This is an important factor when considering how the trailer will pull from Buck Island with a full load of waste, preventing tipping hazards by design and durability with hitting rocks and scraping.

Staff has verified with local sewage hauling companies that no additional licensing or certification will be required for County staff to pump the restrooms or operate the vehicle. Human Resources is creating an extra help classification to fulfill these duties along with other work on the Rubicon.

The County is at least a year away from having a vehicle in place so it is necessary to contract with RTF for another year, with a backup plan in place. The Pumper Trailer will provide a backup plan for 2019 and into the future.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

The County could continue with the current plan in place for restroom pumping on the Rubicon. This option risks a violation from the State Water Quality Control Board and possible closure of the trail. If RTF decides they have no volunteers the County would have no plan in place to address the sanitation issues on the trail.

**PRIOR BOARD ACTION**

12-1031 Rubicon easement  
14-1291 Water Board CAO

**OTHER DEPARTMENT / AGENCY INVOLVEMENT**

Department of Transportation assists with maintenance as needed. Sheriff's Office provides patrols. Environmental Management has the hazardous materials shed at the staging areas.

**CAO RECOMMENDATION / COMMENTS**

It is recommended that the Board approve this item.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT**

The cost of the \$25,000 trailer would be funded through the State Off-Highway Vehicle funds, with no impact to the General Fund. The potential financial impact of a violation of the sanitation plan is \$10,000 per day fine.

**CLERK OF THE BOARD FOLLOW UP ACTIONS**

Provide copies of the signed budget transfer to Vickie Sanders.

**STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENT**

Infrastructure

**CONTACT**

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