



Legislation Text

File #: 18-292, Version: 1

Adopt a resolution approving participation in the California Department of Parks and Recreation, Division of Boating and Waterways Surrendered and Abandoned Vessels Exchange Grant Program supplemental award for the period from contract execution through March 1, 2019; Approve an Appropriation Transfer Request (ATR) of \$90,100 in unanticipated grant revenue to assist the Sheriff's Marine Patrol Unit in the abatement of surrendered and abandoned vessels in County waterways (4/5 vote required); and Authorize the Sheriff or his designees to sign grant award agreements and any associated amendments, operational contracts, or reimbursement claims that remain within budgeted appropriations

Published Notice Required? Yes ____ No X
Public Hearing Required? Yes ____ No X

DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION:

The Sheriff recommends that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Adopt a resolution approving participation in the California Department of Parks and Recreation, Division of Boating and Waterways Surrendered and Abandoned Vessels Exchange Grant Program supplemental award for the period from the date of contract execution through March 1, 2019;
2. Approve an Appropriation Transfer Request (ATR) of \$90,100 in unanticipated grant revenue to assist the Sheriff's Marine Patrol Unit in the abatement of surrendered and abandoned vessels in County waterways (4/5 vote required); and
3. Authorize the Sheriff or his designees to sign grant award agreements and any associated amendments, operational contracts, or reimbursement claims that remain within budgeted appropriations

SUMMARY:

In November 2017, the Sheriff's Office submitted an online grant application for the Surrendered and Abandoned Vessels Exchange (SAVE) Grant Program in response to a notice issued by the California Department of Parks and Recreation, Division of Boating and Waterways (DBW) that supplemental funding was available for FY2017/18. On February 28, 2018, the Sheriff's Office received notice of award from the DBW. Solano County will receive \$90,100 for the removal of the steel hull portion of a houseboat barge that is resting on the bottom of the Montezuma Slough. DBW requires a Board certified resolution and an executed DBW grant agreement to finalize the award acceptance process.

The DBW allocates State funds administered through the SAVE Grant Program to local government agencies to facilitate the removal of surrendered vessels by their owners or the removal and disposal of hazardous vessels that are abandoned in County waterways. In FY2017/18 the State allocated more funds than DBW awarded to applicants which resulted in supplemental grant funding availability.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The 2017 SAVE grant program requires that Sheriff's Office expend the grant award of \$90,100 for the

removal and destruction of abandoned vessels in the Solano County waterways by March 1, 2019. The SAVE Grant Program also requires a ten percent (10%) cash or in-kind match. The Sheriff's Marine Patrol Unit will be tasked with performing additional duties related to grant activities and anticipates using existing appropriation from staff salaries to meet the match obligation. The Appropriation Transfer Request will increase appropriations by \$90,100 to remove a steel hull portion of a houseboat barge from the bottom of the Montezuma Slough. The new appropriations are entirely offset with unanticipated grant revenue. Should the cost to remove the hull exceed the supplemental award, the difference shall be expended from the initial 2017 SAVE grant award. Therefore, there will be no additional impact to the County General Fund.

Currently, the Sheriff's Office has \$24,796 in 2016 SAVE grant funds available to use through September 30, 2018 and \$70,000 in 2017 SAVE grant funds available through March 1, 2019 for abandoned vessels and vessel turn-ins. The Sheriff's Office anticipates fully expending these grant funds within the time period allocated. Grant expenditures will be reimbursed quarterly by DBW and should not significantly impact cash flow.

DISCUSSION:

Pursuant to Harbors and Navigation Code section 525, the DBW will provide funds to the Sheriff for removal of surrendered vessels by their owners or will remove and dispose of hazardous vessels that are abandoned and impeding navigation and polluting Solano County waterways. Owner-surrendered vessels are delivered or picked up by the Sheriff's Office, towed to a local landfill, and destroyed. In October 1997, Senate Bill 172 created the Abandoned Watercraft Abatement Fund (AWAF) which provides funds to public agencies to remove, store, and dispose of abandoned, wrecked, or dismantled vessels or any other partially submerged objects which pose a substantial hazard to navigation, from navigable waterways or adjacent public property, or private property with the landowner's consent. The Vessel Turn-In Program (VTIP) was established by Assembly Bill 166 (Chapter 416, Statutes 2009) and became effective January 1, 2010. The program provides grants to public local agencies to administer a turn-in program in their jurisdiction.

The SAVE Grant program is available to local public agencies applying for both of the Abandoned Watercraft Abatement Fund (AWAF) and the Vessel Turn-In Program (VTIP) grants. The SAVE Grant program combines these two grants into one, providing the convenience of a single grant to manage, and allowing the flexibility to use the SAVE Grant funds interchangeably for AWAF and VTIP issues. In FY2017/18, DBW received more funding from the State than DBW had awarded to applicants. The additional funding was made available via a supplemental application process to assist agencies that had been negatively affected by the unusually wet weather this past winter and spring. This included agencies that managed rivers and other waterways and might need additional assistance in removing abandoned recreational vessels and or other marine debris from their navigable waterways.

The Sheriff will utilize these supplemental funds to remove a steel hull currently resting on the bottom of the Montezuma Slough. The hull is from a dilapidated houseboat barge owned by an otherwise transient person who has been cited numerous times for environmental, criminal, and Harbors and Navigation Code violations. The houseboat barge, approximately 65 feet in length and 25 feet in width, became partially submerged and the steel hull separated from the wooden houseboat structure. On August 31, 2017, the Solano County Marine Patrol Bureau hired a professional salvage company to evaluate, secure, and make safe the steel hull portion of the houseboat barge in order to prevent it from drifting and creating any navigational hazards and mitigating any unforeseen environmental issues. The grant award would allow the hull to be removed from the waterway and destroyed. Without the grant funding, the Sheriff lacks the resources to remove this hull.

Continued support and coordinated efforts are needed to make our waterways clean and safe.

ALTERNATIVES:

The Board can choose not to participate in the program; however, this alternative is not recommended as non-participation will impact the County's ability to remove navigational hazards and mitigate environmental hazards in County waterways. Additionally, this alternative is not fiscally prudent as funds would be distributed to other counties and without these funds, the Sheriff's Office does not have sufficient appropriation to carry out the program activities.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

None.

CAO RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION