



Legislation Text

File #: 20-528, Version: 1

Consider adoption of a resolution authorizing the purchase of the property at 3373 Sackett Lane, Winters, CA in partnership with the Solano County Water Agency, for a total purchase price of \$2,700,000 plus administrative fees and estimated closing costs, of which the Solano County portion of the purchase price will be \$1,350,000 plus one half of the administrative fees and estimated closing costs (4/5 vote required); and Authorize the County Administrator to execute any agreements to acquire the property including entering into an Acquisition and Management Agreement between Solano County and Solano County Water Agency

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

DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION:

The Department of General Services recommends that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Adopt a resolution authorizing the purchase of the property at 3373 Sackett Lane, Winters, CA in partnership with the Solano County Water Agency, for a total purchase price of \$2,700,000 plus administrative fees and estimated closing costs, of which the Solano County portion of the purchase price will be \$1,350,000 plus one half of the administrative fees and estimated closing costs (4/5 vote required); and
2. Authorize the County Administrator to execute any agreements to acquire the property and to enter into an Acquisition and Management Agreement between Solano County and Solano County Water Agency

SUMMARY:

Sackett Ranch is the former location of Four Winds Nursery, directly upstream from Lake Solano. The 74.30 acre parcel includes pre-1914 water rights with direct frontage on Putah Creek. The proposed purchase will be a joint arrangement with the Solano County Water Agency (SCWA) and would allow for the potential use of the property for habitat restoration and preservation of wildlife corridors, educational research opportunities, and continuity of nursery operations. The current property owners have been good stewards of the property's natural resources. Adoption of the resolution and the authorization of the Acquisition and Management Agreement will continue that stewardship while ensuring the protection of the wildlife corridors and riparian habitat.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The purchase price of \$2,700,000 plus administrative fees and estimated closing costs will be split 50/50 with SCWA. The County's share of the purchase price of \$1,350,000, plus administrative fees and estimated closing costs will be paid in two installments with the first due upon closing and the second due to SCWA on the one-year anniversary of the closing. The cost to purchase this land will be funded by the Accumulated Capital Outlay Fund (Fund 006). Ongoing maintenance and operation costs will be shared equally between the County and SCWA and will be defined in the Acquisition and Management Agreement. Budget will be submitted for consideration during the supplemental budget hearing. The costs associated with preparing the agenda item are nominal and absorbed by the department's FY2020/21 Preliminary Budget.

DISCUSSION:

The proposed property, commonly referred to as Sackett Ranch, consists of a single 74.30-acre parcel located immediately upstream of Lake Solano. Until 2018, the property was used to grow citrus and fruit trees for wholesale and internet sales. The nursery facilities include a 10,800 sq. ft. greenhouse with automated climate venting and irrigation, approximately 17 acres of gravel with shade cover and micro-irrigation, a 3,600 sq. ft. warehouse, 800 sq. ft. office and numerous outbuildings. In addition to the main residential dwelling and small cottage, it includes 18 acres of open ground for orchards or other crops, 21 acres of rolling hillside suitable for native grass plantings, and 18 acres of prime Putah Creek riparian zone in a restoration area.

The potential benefits of the property include pre-1914 water rights with direct frontage on Putah Creek, high quality water that is directly downstream from Monticello Dam, two high functioning water wells, as well as suitable areas for habitat restoration and possible mitigation banking. There is potential for renewed nursery operations given the high-quality structures that exist on the site including shade structures and sophisticated irrigation systems. Other benefits include preservation of important wildlife corridors from the surrounding ridges to Putah Creek, and buildings on site suitable for research activities by institutions such as University of California at Davis.

Staff is recommending the execution of an Acquisition and Management Agreement (Agreement) with SCWA that would authorize the purchase of the property jointly with SCWA and allow the County to pay its share of the purchase price in two installments, the first one due at closing and the second on the one-year anniversary of the closing. The management of the property will be overseen by a management committee comprised of two representatives from the Board of Supervisors and two members from the SCWA Board.

ALTERNATIVES:

The Board could choose not to approve the purchase of the property. This alternative is not recommended since the property would allow for the potential use of the property for habitat restoration and preservation of wildlife corridors, educational research opportunities, and continuity of nursery operations.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

Staff from Resource Management and SCWA have been involved in the negotiation of the purchase and the potential habitat mitigation uses of the property. The Office of County Counsel has reviewed the Acquisition and Management Agreement and Resolution for legal sufficiency.

CAO RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION