

Staff Report

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Keane Sommers, P.E., Director of Power Systems

DATE: February 14, 2024

SUBJECT: Award of a Multi-Year Contract for Helicopter Services (Consent)

HYDROELECTRIC

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Board of Directors:

- Award a multi-year contract to A&P Helicopter, Inc. for helicopter services for an annual cost not to exceed \$175,000 and a total not to exceed \$525,000 through December 31, 2026 with the option to extend the contract for additional three-year term; and
- Authorize the General Manager to execute all necessary documents.

BACKGROUND:

The District's Hydroelectric Department regularly requires helicopter support for activities including:

- aerial inspection of infrastructure including dams, powerlines, and canals
- power pole setting
- wire stringing or repairs
- long lining of cargo
- personnel transport
- snow surveys
- data acquisition to support regulatory requirements

The need for these services has increased significantly with the acquisition of the South Yuba Canal where work areas are often inaccessible by road. Additionally, the elevated nature of some flumes means that even when a road is nearby tools and materials must be lifted on to the top of the structures. A single girder for the elevated portion of the flume weighs approximately 700 lbs. and the tool kit necessary to make repairs can weight as much as 1,000 lbs.

In order to identify a contractor that could meet all of the District's needs, staff sent a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to seven vendors. Among other details, Staff requested:

- An overview of the company including personnel, equipment (including normal base of operation), and capabilities
- A rate sheet detailing the costs for all equipment to be used during or to support the services described above
- A description of the company's safety program and five years of accident history

Three vendors responded to the RFQ by the due date of February 1, 2024. Staff considered equipment capability, pilot availability, proximity to District facilities, and cost of services when determining which vendor would be awarded a contract. A&P Helicopters, Inc. capabilities and equipment align closely with District needs. Additionally, they are headquartered in Richvale, CA which allows them to respond quickly and cost effectively to District requests. Their rates are in a competitive range when compared to other respondents. Additionally, A&P Helicopters, Inc has routinely provided helicopter service to the District previously. Staff has found them to be safe, professional, and cost effective.

BUDGETARY IMPACT:

The 2024 Hydroelectric Operations Fund includes \$175,000 for helicopter services spread between the three Departments (Hydro Administration, Hydro Operations, and Hydro Maintenance). Expenses for future years will be included in future budgets.

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