

STAFF REPORT

City Council Consent Item

DATE: October 17, 2022

TO: Honorable Mayor and Council Members

FROM: Merritt Perry, City Manager

**SUBJECT: Award of Bid for the 2022 Vancil Tree Removal Project Ford Logging Inc.
DBA Pacific Earthscape**

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the City Council award the 2022 Vancil Tree Removal Project to Ford Logging, Inc. and authorize the City Manager to execute all applicable documents.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City owns and operates the five million gallon Vancil reservoir located on Vancil Street in the City of Fortuna. The parcel the reservoir sits on is approximately 13 acres in size with the reservoir occupying approximately two and a half acres. There are redwood and fir trees surrounding the reservoir site that routinely drop needles and branches, which causes drainage issues and fence damage. The proximity of the existing trees to the reservoir results in an increased risk of fire damage. Additionally, there are four residences adjacent to the timbered portion of the site near Vancil Street that have requested that trees be removed from the City parcel that are in close proximity to their homes. This portion of the vegetation treatment project area will enhance structure protection from wildfire.

The portion of the project recommended for award to Pacific Earthscape is the timber operation portion of the project. The overall project will be completed in various phases and includes grading, drainage, tree removal, fencing and other site improvements is included in the City's capital improvement program and is identified as project 9370. In July of 2021, the council approved a contract with BBW Associates (BBW), a forestry consulting company, to assist the City with permitting removal of some trees surrounding the Vancil Reservoir.

Since that time, BBW has prepared draft timber harvest exemptions and supporting background studies necessary for CAL FIRE to obtain approvals to harvest trees in close proximity to the reservoir, assisted with soliciting bids for the sale of the timber and identified the proposed location and operational parameters consistent with CAL FIRE Exemptions CCR 1104.1(b)(c) and 1038.c.

The planned selective tree removal will reduce wildfire hazard adjacent to residential structures and remove encroaching trees from the base of the Vancil reservoir. Tree removal is generally limited to within 100 feet of the reservoir fence, and trees selected for removal will remove ladder fuels, intermediate sized trees with poor form and trees around the reservoir perimeter that cast debris onto the structure roof. Removal of some trees is necessary for the water reservoir perimeter fence replacement as well. Some larger conifers with stronger form will be retained.

BBW and City staff have reached out to adjacent neighbors and feedback that those adjacent to the timber harvest support the project.

In July 2022, the City advertised for bids the sale of approximately 65 thousand board feet (mbf) of timber. The City awarded a bid to Humboldt Redwood Company on August 15, 2022. Following the timber sale, the City advertised for bids for Licensed Timber Operators to conduct the tree removal operations and received no bids. The project was advertised a second time and one bid was received from Ford Logging Inc. of McKinleyville, CA. The lone bid was based upon or \$1,000/mbf gross volume shipped to Scotia, CA. The bid includes all mobilization, tree work and slash material clean up. There is a relatively high cost for the timber operation, as it will require climbing and pulling some trees along the residential interface and removal and or chipping of residual slash (limbs and tops).

Once the timber operations on the site are complete, the City will proceed with planning the remaining improvements on the site.

FISCAL IMPACT:

It is anticipated that the timber sale from the tree removal project will cover costs for the tree removal portion of the project and may generate a small amount of revenue. The project is budgeted for the remaining improvements at the site in the Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Capital Improvement Program and includes the costs for the forestry consultants, drainage, fencing and other site work.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Award the 2022 Vancil Tree Removal Project to Ford Logging, Inc. and authorize the City Manager to execute all applicable documents. Consent Agenda vote.