

**COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO  
CALIFORNIA**

For the Agenda of:  
June 9, 2009

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Agricultural Commissioner's Office

Subject: Authorization For Agricultural Commissioner To Enter Into Agreement 09-73-06-0267-RA With United States Department Of Agriculture For Wildlife Services

Supervisory District: All

Contact: Frank E. Carl, Agricultural Commissioner, 875-6348

**Overview:**

The Board of Supervisors has annually approved the budget and work plan for the Wildlife Services Program as part of the budget process. This year the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has included a renewal of the Cooperative Service Agreement which provides the authority and responsibilities of the parties under the Agreement. The Cooperative Service Agreement was last approved by the Board in 2004. This agreement has a specified term of five years unless cancelled with 60 days written notice.

**Recommendations:**

Approve the attached resolution authorizing the Agricultural Commissioner to execute the Cooperative Service Agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services and designate the Agricultural Commissioner as the authorized representative responsible for collaboratively administering the activities conducted under the Agreement.

**Measures/Evaluation:**

Numbers and types of service calls are carefully tracked to determine wildlife pressures and conflicts within the urban and agricultural community.

**Eleven-Point Plan:**

This program is in compliance with the eleven-point plan. Fees were last adjusted in 2008 and are the most comprehensive of any fee support plan for a Cooperative Wildlife Services Program in the nation.

**Fiscal Impact:**

The proposed budget and annual work plan provides two Federal Wildlife Service Specialists for Sacramento County at a cost of \$177,049. The cost of the program is shared between federal and local co-operators with the Federal share being \$69,049 and the County share \$108,000. The cost of the county share is offset by \$44,697 in direct fees and other revenues, \$38,944 from participating cities, and \$24,359 from the County General Fund.

BACKGROUND:

The Wildlife Services Program is a cooperative program with the United States Department of Agriculture that has been in place in Sacramento County for approximately 75 years. The Cooperative Agreement with the USDA was last approved by the Board of Supervisors in 2004 and was to continue for five years unless cancelled by either party. The work plan and budget have been approved each year during budget hearings which provide the Board with an annual review of the program and service levels provided. The program in Sacramento County is administered by the Agricultural Commissioner's office and is heavily focused on skunk control with raccoons, beavers, opossums, and coyotes also demanding attention. Services are offered to all county residents without regard to whether they reside in an incorporated city or in the unincorporated area of the County. The program costs are shared among Sacramento County, the participating incorporated cities, the Federal Government and direct fees from individuals requesting services.

The Wildlife Services Program is intended to provide affordably priced and dependable professional assistance in managing wild animals on public and private property that present a human or animal health problem or cause damage to personal property or domestic animals. Because Sacramento County is a rabies endemic area with abundant natural habitat favoring skunk populations, skunk control has been a primary focus of the program. In recent years, beavers have also become significant target specie due to urban development near natural drainages that may be impacted by beaver activity resulting in localized flooding.

For several years the County has collected a small fee from customers requesting service. This fee was not intended to recover the full cost of the program, but to ensure participation by the homeowner and to encourage the customer to take the necessary steps to discourage skunks and other problem animals from frequenting their property.

DISCUSSION:

The Cooperative Service Agreement is the base agreement that documents the authority and responsibility of the parties to the Agreement. It also designates the county representative that is responsible for administering the agreement on behalf of the County. This agreement designates the Sacramento County Agricultural Commissioner as that representative.

Supervising Deputy County Counsel has reviewed and approved the format and content of the Agreement.

FEES:

City participation in the program has allowed the department to maintain fees at the relatively low cost of \$25 per service request. The Fiscal Year 2009-10 Proposed Budget has reduced the county allocation for this program by more than fifty percent. The full county share of the program based on service levels provided to unincorporated county residents over the previous

Authorization For Agricultural Commissioner To Enter Into Agreement 09-73-06-0267-RA With  
United States Department Of Agriculture For Wildlife Services

Page 3

four years is \$48,956. The proposed allocation of \$24,359 will result in County residents paying a higher service fee than that of residents requesting the same services in the incorporated cities. The county fee will need to be adjusted to \$84 while the city resident fee will remain at \$25. This differential fee is expected to have negative impacts on the program, will increase homeowners taking control measures into their own hands and will result in increased complaints in regard to general program services in the unincorporated area of the County.

MEASURES/EVALUATION:

Wildlife Services Specialists keep meticulous records of the number of calls and types of calls received on a daily basis. These records help provide a measure of population trends, disease outbreaks, successes and failures in management approaches. This data is the cornerstone of our assessment to the incorporated cities of their respective share of the annual contract amount. Therefore it is necessary to evaluate the data at least annually.

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS:

The total program budget for Fiscal Year 2009-10 is \$177,049. The Agreement provides two fully equipped Federal Wildlife Service Specialists for Sacramento County. The cost of the program is shared among federal and local co-operators with the Federal share being \$69,049 and the county share \$108,000. The cost of the county share is offset by \$44,697 in direct fees, \$38,944 from participating cities, and \$24,359 from the County General Fund. The budget process provides the Board with an annual opportunity to review program service levels and adjustments in cost share.

CONCLUSION:

The Department respectfully requests that the Board of Supervisors grant the Commissioner authority to enter into the Agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture, APHIS, Wildlife Services to maintain the Wildlife Services Program in Sacramento County, and to renew the Agreement each year for the succeeding four years so long as each budget submitted is approved by the Board of Supervisors.

Respectfully submitted,

APPROVED:  
TERRY SCHUTTEN  
County Executive

FRANK E. CARL, Director  
Agricultural Commissioner/  
Sealer of Weights and Measures

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
JAMES W. HUNT, Interim Administrator  
Countywide Services Agency

Attachment(s):  
RES Wildlife Services  
AGR Wildlife Services