

PORT OF SEATTLE
MEMORANDUM

COMMISSION AGENDA

Item No. 6a

Date of Meeting April 13, 2010

DATE: March 18, 2010

TO: Tay Yoshitani, Chief Executive Officer

FROM: Bob Duffner, Water Resources Manager, Aviation Environmental
Elizabeth Leavitt, Director, Aviation Planning and Environmental

SUBJECT: Natural Resource Maintenance Interlocal Agreement with the Washington
Conservation Corps

Amount of This Request: \$0

Source of Funds: Annual Operating Budget or Future Individual Project Authorizations

Estimated Workers Employed: Up to Twelve

ACTION REQUESTED:

Request Port Commission authorization for the Port's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to execute an Interlocal Agreement (ILA) with the Washington Conservation Corps (WCC) in a form substantially as attached in Exhibit A, for natural resource maintenance services totaling \$700,000 over five (5) years in support of wetland mitigation site management at the Seattle Tacoma International Airport (Airport) and other natural resource management at Port properties. No funding is associated with this authorization.

SYNOPSIS:

This ILA provides the Port with the resources necessary to meet the long term natural resource maintenance requirements of the Airport's wetland mitigation program in compliance with the 404 Permit and 401 Water Quality Certification for the Master Plan Update Improvement (MPU) projects as well as natural resource maintenance needs at other Airport and Seaport properties. Through this agreement, the Port will establish a partnership in which the WCC will provide natural resource maintenance services and in doing so, will provide valuable environmental work experience and develop leadership skills in young adults. The WCC is a sub-agency of the Washington State Department of Ecology and is part of the federal Americorps program. The Port will provide funding, management and oversight by staff that have natural resource management experience as well as prior leadership experience in youth corps programs. This ILA establishes a formal understanding between the WCC and the Port to obtain the WCC

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maintenance services. The ILA is designed to specify kinds and amounts of goals and services to be used and/or exchanged by WCC and the Port to their mutual benefit through a Port project.

BACKGROUND:

As mitigation for impacts related to the construction of the Third Runway and other MPU projects, the Port created, restored and enhanced over 144 acres of wetlands and wetland buffers. The Department of Ecology's 401 Certification and the US Army Corps of Engineer's 404 permits require that these wetlands and buffers meet stringent performance standards for plant survival, density and overall function for a period of 15 years. In order to meet these requirements, the Port must perform regular plant maintenance including vegetation trimming, replacement of dead plants, weed management, soil amendment application, protection from grazing, and maintenance of irrigation systems. Staff anticipates that the majority of the wetland mitigation site maintenance efforts will occur over the next five years. After this initial period, plant establishment should progress to the point where the permit standards could be met with a reduced effort through the remaining compliance period.

In addition to the Airport MPU wetland mitigation sites, there are other natural resource sites on Seaport and Aviation properties with maintenance requirements that would be met through this ILA. The Port has implemented significant environmental restoration, cleanup and habitat enhancement projects as part of its capital improvement programs and ongoing operations and management of Port facilities. Fish and wildlife habitat sites located in Elliott Bay and the Duwamish Waterway may require assistance to maintain and improve riparian and marsh vegetation conditions.

The WCC is a state agency that specializes in the conservation, rehabilitation, and enhancement of the state's natural and environmental resources while providing educational opportunities and meaningful work experiences for young adults (ages 18 to 25). WCC was established in 1983 and is a part of the federal AmeriCorps program. Through partnerships with local, state, and federal agencies, the WCC completes restoration, recreation, and other stewardship projects throughout the state.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION/SCOPE OF WORK:

This request is for authorization to enter into an ILA with the WCC for Natural Resource Maintenance Services. Maintenance services may include; selective trimming of desired vegetation, replacement plantings in areas of high mortality or low vigor, planting in areas of low density or cover, weed management, soil amendment, installation of rodent guards, troubleshooting existing irrigation systems, supporting existing monitoring efforts, habitat stabilization and other natural resource maintenance services. Under this ILA, the WCC would provide management services, labor and plants.

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Natural resource maintenance services performed under this agreement will primarily be performed at Airport wetland mitigation sites. In addition, other natural resource maintenance services may be performed at Aviation and Seaport properties including those located along Elliott Bay and the Duwamish Waterway. The ILA will remain effective for a maximum term of five years and with a maximum value of \$700,000.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

This agreement supports the Port's strategy to "Enhance Public Understanding and Support of the Port's Role in the Region" by providing a cost effective means to maintain our natural resources while building a working partnership with another state agency.

In addition, this agreement supports the Port's strategy to "Exhibit Environmental Stewardship through our Actions" by facilitating the maintenance of natural resources on Port property while providing young adults with hands-on experience and leadership opportunities in the environmental field.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Budget/Authorization Summary

The ILA will have a not-to-exceed dollar threshold. The total costs for services performed under this ILA will not exceed \$700,000. No work is guaranteed to WCC under this agreement. The Port will authorize work under individual task orders as specific work tasks are required and funding for that work is authorized by the Commission.

No budget authorization request is associated with this Commission action.

Source of Funds

The costs associated with services to be performed under this ILA in 2010 at Airport wetland mitigation sites are in the Commission approved 2010 Aviation Division operating budget. Costs for 2011 through 2014 Aviation wetland mitigation site maintenance will be included in subsequent annual Aviation Environmental operating budget requests. Funding for maintenance services at other natural resource sites will be provided through future individual project or other department operating budget authorizations.

ECONOMIC IMPACTS:

It is estimated that the plant maintenance efforts at Aviation mitigation sites will employ up to 12 young adults for varying periods of time in 2010 and 2011. With future authorized funding, it is estimated one crew of 6 will be employed at various times in 2012 through 2014 for Aviation

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wetland mitigation site maintenance. Maintenance work at other natural resource sites would provide additional employment opportunities. This work will provide these individuals hands-on experience in environmental site management and will provide opportunities to develop leadership skills

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND COMMUNITY BENEFITS:

A robust plant maintenance effort over the next five years is necessary to ensure the valuable natural resources created and enhanced at the Aviation wetland mitigation sites will survive and meet the ecological functions they were designed for. Recent agency reviews of wetland mitigation sites in the Northwest found a high degree of site failure partially due to inadequate maintenance during the initial establishment period. This ILA will provide an effective means to ensure Port environmental obligations are met and the mitigation sites we have created provide a sustained ecological benefit to our region.

In addition, this partnership with the WCC will provide valuable work experience to young adults in our region.

TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE SUMMARY:

This ILA will provide a financially responsible way to ensure the Port meets the permit requirements for construction of the Third Runway and other MPU projects while providing benefits to the local community. By aggressively maintaining our wetland mitigation sites over the next five years, we will ensure the sites succeed and avoid costly redesign and reestablishment if they were to fail.

PROJECT SCHEDULE:

Approximately sixty percent of the maintenance efforts at Aviation wetland mitigation sites are scheduled to be completed in late 2010 and early 2011. Scope and magnitude of the remaining maintenance work will be determined on plant development and permitting agency review.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED/RECOMMENDED ACTION:

- 1) Do nothing: This alternative would result in the failure of the Aviation wetland mitigation sites and violation of the Port's 401 Certification and 404 Permit for construction of the Third Runway and other MPU projects. This is not the preferred alternative.
- 2) Issue a competed purchased service contract to a landscape management firm. This option would not allow the Port to form a partnership with the WCC and engage in a program that supports the development of young adults through natural resource management projects. This is not the preferred alternative.

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- 3) Execute an ILA with the WCC as described in this memorandum. This option provides an effective means to maintain Port wetland and other natural resource sites through a young adult development program with a partnering state agency. This is the preferred alternative.

PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTION:

On November 23, 2009, the Commission authorized the Aviation Division operating expense budget for 2010 which contained \$360,000 for wetland plant maintenance. It is estimated that between \$150,000 and \$200,000 of these authorized funds will be spent on task order issued under this ILA in 2010. The ILA would also be applicable to future annual budgets and individual project authorizations.

DOCUMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS REQUEST:

Exhibit A – ILA between the Port and the WCC