



**COMMISSION  
AGENDA MEMORANDUM**

**Item No.** 6e

**ACTION ITEM**

**Date of Meeting** October 13, 2020

**DATE:** October 6, 2020  
**TO:** Stephen P. Metruck, Executive Director  
**FROM:** Sarah Cox, Senior Manager, Aviation Environment & Sustainability  
Arlyn Purcell, Director, Aviation Environment and Sustainability  
**SUBJECT:** **Natural Resource Interlocal Agreement with the Washington Conservation Corps**

**Amount of this request:** \$1,500,000

**ACTION REQUESTED**

Request Commission authorization for the Executive Director to execute an Interlocal Agreement (ILA) with the Washington Conservation Corps (WCC). This ILA will provide services totaling up to \$1,500,000 over five (5) years to support regulatory required vegetation management at Sea-Tac International Airport (SEA) and other natural resource management actions at Port properties. No funding is associated with this authorization.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This ILA provides the Port with the resources necessary to meet the long-term natural resource maintenance requirements of the Airport's Third Runway Clean Water Act section 404 permit and 401 Water Quality Certification, Flight Corridor permit requirements, and voluntary land and forest stewardship at other airport and maritime properties. Through this agreement, the Port will continue an established partnership with the WCC to provide natural resource maintenance services and in doing so will provide valuable environmental work experience and support leadership development in young adults.

A previous ILA with the WCC ended in April 2020. During this 10-year partnership, the WCC has played a critical role in ensuring the ongoing success of the Airport's wetland mitigation and land stewardship program while providing valuable work and leadership skills to young adults. Approximately 150 corps members working within 25 teams planted over 100,000 plants and provided necessary invasive weed control. Throughout this partnership, over \$900,000 was spent on team leadership, crew labor, plants and other planting supplies.

Meeting Date: October 13, 2020

**JUSTIFICATION**

The objective of this agreement is to provide resources needed to complete both permit-required maintenance efforts and voluntary stewardship actions at mitigation and other natural resource sites while providing vital education and leadership opportunities to young adults.

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.

The Port’s natural resource areas have a variety of regulated activities that must occur to meet permit requirements established for the Third Runway project and Flight Corridor Safety Program or other local codes. The requirements can vary greatly from year to year; a flexible contracting mechanism, like an ILA, is desirable to ensure the Port can meet its legal obligations. The ILA action does not preclude the Port from exploring other options; it only provides a safety net to ensure the required actions can be completed.

***Diversity in Contracting***

The ILA does not have goals established for women- and minority-owned business enterprise (WMBE).

WCC recruits members statewide and targets Washington counties in which members serve. When interviewing and selecting members, crew supervisors emphasize WCC’s core values with potential members, which includes commitments to fostering an inclusive culture by ensuring equitable access to opportunities and empowerment across all identities represented in a diverse organization. In addition, once enrolled members complete Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion training within their first term of service.

**DETAILS**

The ILA mechanism does not promise any level of work to WCC. The ILA process is running in parallel with an effort to contract with smaller local community groups that would supplement or partially replace proposed WCC work. Discussions are underway with the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Aviation Environmental Engagement Manager, and the Central Procurement Office (CPO) to leverage existing contracts or create alternative contracting mechanisms that would allow for selection of the local community environmental groups.

The Port will provide funding and project management and oversight while the direct field crew management is performed by Washington Conservation Corps Crew Leads. No work is guaranteed to the WCC through this agreement, as the Port may meet all or some of its mitigation

Meeting Date: October 13, 2020

and land stewardship requirements through alternative means such as in-house field crews, existing contractors, or alternative contracting with other organizations.

### ***Scope of Work***

Maintenance services to be completed under this ILA may include: selective vegetation trimming, 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 and other natural resource maintenance services. Under this ILA, the WCC would provide crew management services, labor and plants.

Natural resource maintenance services performed under this agreement will primarily be performed at SEA wetland mitigation sites in compliance with existing permits. Due in large part to WCC support, the mitigation sites initially constructed are maturing so maintenance needs on these sites will continue to decline over the period of this agreement. In addition to routine site maintenance, roadways may need to be decommissioned at the Auburn mitigation site and will be re-vegetated through this ILA.

Other work not required by existing permits will include: 1) Vegetation plantings at the former Tyee Golf Course may be needed to improve upland habitat while reducing bird attractants which pose a hazard to Airport operations; 2) 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; and 3) Other natural resource services may be performed on Aviation and Seaport properties including those located along Elliott Bay and the Duwamish Waterway.

### **Key Scope Items:**

- As mitigation for impacts related to the construction of the Third Runway and other 1997 Master Plan Updates (MPU) projects, the Port created, restored and enhanced over 164 acres of wetlands and wetland buffers. The 401 and 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. Due to the staggered construction dates of the mitigation sites (Des Moines Nursery, Tyee Golf Course, Williams property, and Lora Lake were constructed between 2012-2020) several sites will require higher levels of maintenance until they become more established. This period will end between 2022 and 2027. 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 and grazing protection.
- In addition to the Airport's 1997 MPU wetland mitigation sites, there are other natural resource sites on seaport and aviation properties. 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. Two major projects would be the Lora Lake conversion to wetland habitat and

Meeting Date: October 13, 2020

the Flight Corridor Safety Program that required extensive weed removal and planting efforts. Ongoing maintenance of the projects is required to ensure their success. These sites and the numerous non-project natural areas owned by the Port are also subject to local regulations regarding noxious weed control which require extensive field effort. As the 1997 MPU mitigation areas near their regulatory completion the focus will shift to providing responsible land stewardship activities on these additional properties.

***Schedule***

The ILA will remain effective for a maximum term of five years. Scope and magnitude of the remaining maintenance work will be determined by site progress and permitting agency review.

Port project managers will order work seasonally, with invasive species removal and other clearing activities typically occurring in summer and fall and tree planting typically occurring in the winter and spring.

**ALTERNATIVES AND IMPLICATIONS CONSIDERED**

**Alternative 1** – Do not procure vegetation management services to support natural resource permit compliance and land stewardship.

Cost Implications: \$0

Pros:

- (1) Least costly alternative.

Cons:

- (1) Does not allow SEA to comply with Third Runway and Flight Corridor mitigation permits.
- (2) Does not allow SEA to continue its voluntary Land Stewardship Program.
- (3) Noncompliance with existing permits may affect ability to obtain future permits.
- (4) Does not support workforce development.

This is not the recommended alternative.

**Alternative 2** – Procure a personal services contract to support natural resource permit compliance and land stewardship.

Cost Implications: \$3.8M

Pros:

- (1) Allows SEA to comply with Third Runway and Flight Corridor mitigation permits.
- (2) Allows SEA to continue its voluntary Land Stewardship Program.

Cons:

- (1) Most costly alternative.
- (2) Does not directly support workforce development.

This is not the recommended alternative.

Meeting Date: October 13, 2020

**Alternative 3** – Execute an ILA with Washington Conservation Corps to provide vegetation management services in support of natural resource permit compliance and land stewardship.

Cost Implications: \$1.5M

Pros:

- (1) Continues a successful partnership with the WCC that has provided quality natural resource project work and on-the-job experience for young adults
- (2) The flexible nature of the ILA service directive process allows short notice, smaller projects to be completed during the correct season
- (3) Provides a cost-effective means to maintain regulatory required mitigation and continue voluntary Land Stewardship Program.
- (4) Least costly alternative that allows SEA to comply with Third Runway and Flight Corridor mitigation permits.
- (5) Cost effective alternative that allow SEA to continue its voluntary Land Stewardship Program.
- (6) Supports workforce development

Cons:

- (1) None.

***This is the recommended alternative.***

***Annual Budget Status and Source of Funds***

Funding will be provided primarily by annual expense funds from the Aviation and Maritime Environment and Sustainability Natural Resources Programs.

**ATTACHMENTS TO THIS REQUEST**

- (1) Draft Interlocal Agreement
- (2) PowerPoint Presentation

**PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTIONS OR BRIEFINGS**

The Commission authorized two previous ILA's with WCC on April 13, 2010, and February 24, 2015.