



VENTURA
PORT DISTRICT
Established 1952

BOARD OF PORT COMMISSIONERS

SEPTEMBER 13, 2017

CONSENT AGENDA ITEM H

ACCEPTANCE OF 10-MONTH
NO-COST EXTENSION TO
2015 SHELLFISH GRANT

VENTURA PORT DISTRICT
BOARD COMMUNICATION

CONSENT AGENDA ITEM H
Meeting Date: September 13, 2017

TO: Board of Port Commissioners
FROM: Brian Pendleton, Business Operations Manager
SUBJECT: Acceptance of 10-Month No-Cost Extension to 2015 Shellfish Grant

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board of Port Commissioners authorize the General Manager to execute a 10-month extension to the *Cost Reimbursement Research Subaward Agreement* for the Ventura Shellfish Enterprise (VSE) project.

SUMMARY:

The Ventura Port District was awarded a two year, \$300,000 2015 Sea Grant (approximately \$265,000 in sub award funds granted directly to the District) to contract with qualified consultants for development of a strategic permitting plan, completion of all necessary permit applications, preparation of environmental reports, and public outreach efforts to develop a sustainably cultivated shellfish operation in State waters near Ventura Harbor.

The two-year grant period ended August 31, 2017. The California Sea Grant as grant awardee (the District is sub-awardee) agreed to request a routine 1-year extension allowing for a total of three years to complete Tasks 1-3. The California Sea Grant has received federal authorization for a 10-month grant extension. The 10-month extension covers the period from September 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018.

BACKGROUND:

Increasing the supply of safe, sustainably produced domestic seafood is a priority for NOAA and the Department of Commerce. The Ventura Shellfish Enterprise (VSE) is a multi-stakeholder initiative that seeks to permit and manage a commercial shellfish culture, which is technically proven as a method for the production of high value seafood with limited environmental impacts. However, the permitting process in California for such production is uncertain and not adequately developed to attract participation. VSE seeks to address several regulatory and planning challenges that create impediments to the expansion of a domestic marine shellfish culture industry in California.

The objective of the grant is to provide:

- A technically sound and thorough strategy to successfully obtain all required government entitlements necessary to establish twenty 100-acre aquaculture leases in the state waters of the Santa Barbara Channel.
- Successfully permitted applications for the leases, associated environmental review documents, and completed baseline sampling protocol and data necessary for a California Department of Public Health (CDPH) Shellfish Growing Area Certificate; and,
- A comprehensive outreach strategy aimed at soliciting the support and participation of various stakeholders by educating prospective commercial fishermen, investors/entrepreneurs, shellfish processors, and consumers about the benefits of locally sourced and sustainably raised mussels.

These objectives are accomplished through three tasks:

Task 1 – The Strategic Permitting Plan

The Strategic Permitting Plan is now complete. The document was provided to the Board, made available to the public and provided to State and Federal agencies for review and comment. The comments will be attached to the document as an appendix and evaluated as the project moves forward.

Task 2 – Permits, applications, environmental reports and water quality testing

A lease application is being prepared for submission to the State. Required environmental review documents will be prepared. Discussions are underway with California Department of Public Health (CDPH) regarding water sampling for Shellfish Growing Area Certification.

Task 3 Education and Outreach

Education and Outreach is now complete. The VSE website was development and a total of 10 educational and site selection workshops were held. The VSE website will continue to be used for on-going project education, outreach and notification of VSE activities and meetings.

FISCAL IMPACT:

None.

ATTACHMENT:

None.