

PORT OF TACOMA
Sole Source Contract Briefing

DATE: December 16, 2022
TO: Port of Tacoma Commissioners
CC: Jason Jordan, Director, Environmental and Planning Programs
Sharon Rothwell, Director, Contracts and Purchasing
Tony Warfield, Senior Project Manager, Permitting
FROM: Kristin Evered, Port Biologist
SUBJECT: Mitigation Site Stewardship Program Sole Source Contract with EarthCorps

A. BRIEFING

Staff would like to enter into a (1) one-year sole source contract with EarthCorps to perform stewardship activities at the Port's Habitat Mitigation sites. The Stewardship Program is authorized by Commission each year as part of the budgeting process. Funds for this contract are estimated at \$150,000 per year.

B. BACKGROUND

Each of the Port's habitat mitigation sites require ongoing stewardship to ensure their appropriate condition continues in perpetuity. Some of these sites are actively monitored under permit and/or agreement conditions, while formal monitoring is complete on other sites. The stewardship activities must be carried out by non-profit or citizen groups to align with Port labor agreements.

Previous non-profit contract holders including Citizens (now Community) for a Healthy Bay and Forterra no longer provide these types of stewardship activities. Most recently stewardship work has been conducted by the Washington Conservation Corps (WCC) through the direction of Forterra. Unfortunately, with Forterra ceasing this type of stewardship activities and with WCC crew time in such high demand, the Port has not been able to secure enough crew days to meet 2023 program needs. The covid pandemic and following labor shortage reduced the number of stewardship workdays in 2020-2022, resulting in an urgent need to obtain stewardship crew time to meet permit conditions at sites under formal monitoring.

C. JUSTIFICATION

Many local non-profit organizations, citizens groups, and governments rely on WCC crews to perform their stewardship work. The high demand for WCC crew time along with WCC labor shortages present a challenge for obtaining stewardship services. Contracting with a non-profit or citizen group with their own crew would alleviate this challenge.

Port Environmental staff conferred with leaders in the non-profit stewardship sector and were referred to EarthCorps. EarthCorps is a non-profit organization with dedicated work crews, experience with stewardship at sites near Commencement Bay and 2023 crew availability. We would like to expedite the contract as their crew times are filling up.

D. SCOPE OF WORK

EarthCorps will perform weed and invasive species removal, spot herbicide application, native plant installation and incidental trash removal at select habitat sites. EarthCorps will accomplish this work with a mix of their own intern-based crews and coordinating volunteer events.

E. CURRENT STATUS

The contract for the 2023 stewardship scope of work will be executed within 30 days of Commission notification.