COON CREEK WATERSHED DISTRICT
Request for Board Action

MEETING DATE: May 28, 2019
AGENDA NUMBER: 6
ITEM: Water Quality Cost Share Program 2019 Awards

AGENDA: Policy

ACTION REQUESTED
Award cost share funds to 4 projects for the amounts listed and direct staff to post a second RFP

BACKGROUND
Section 303(d) of the federal Clean Water Act requires states to identify waters that do not meet applicable water quality standards or do not fully support their designated beneficial uses. Coon, Sand, Pleasure, and Springbrook Creeks were listed as impaired for both aquatic life and aquatic recreation in 2006 and 2014, respectively. The Coon Creek Watershed TMDL, approved on September 26, 2016, established pollutant load allocations for total suspended sediments, total phosphorus, and E. coli applicable to all contributing MS4s in the District. Strategies to achieve pollutant load reductions and to address non-pollutant stressors to aquatic life (e.g. poor habitat, low dissolved oxygen) were included in the approved Coon Creek Watershed District WRAPS report.

To accelerate progress towards achieving pollutant reductions and to foster collaboration among local partners, the District launched a water quality cost share program in 2019. During this pilot year, $100,000 was made available to provide 50% match funds towards eligible projects, up to $50,000 per project. A request for proposals was distributed to applicable MS4s in January of 2019. By the May 3rd application deadline, 5 proposals were received from 2 cities, totaling $175,400 in requests:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title (Applicant)</th>
<th>Amount Requested</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aberdeen construction (Ham Lake)</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>Expanding ponds and infiltration basin beyond permit requirements to maximize treatment of runoff. Adding a sump to an outlet control structure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goose Management (Coon Rapids)</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
<td>Contracted goose removal services at 4 targeted, high-density sites within the Coon Creek subwatershed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joma Plow Blades (Coon Rapids)</td>
<td>$22,400</td>
<td>Purchasing 4 Sets of Joma Cutting Edge plow blades to improve the snow/ice removal ability of existing equipment for use in areas at high-risk for chloride impairment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tronson Creek stabilization (Coon Rapids)</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>Replacement of culvert under 119th Ave notorious for ice dams due to low flows and regrading/buffer establishment along upstream channel where property owners are mowing to edge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foley culvert (Coon Rapids)</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>Replacement of culverts under Foley Blvd and removal of fish barrier via channel enhancement/re-sloping</td>
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</table>
The District Engineer and Staff reviewed all proposals for completeness and eligibility and independently scored projects according to the following rubric:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Maximum Points Possible</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project Description:</strong> Clear, concise description of proposed project, goals, and methods to achieve stated outcomes. Water quality improvement is the primary purpose of the proposed project.</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Water quality outcomes:</strong> Priority is given in the following order: Projects that address: 1) TMDL WLAs, 2) TMDL LAs and non-pollutant stressors to aquatic life impairments, 3) chloride reductions in high risk waters. Projects will score higher that address multiple priorities or pollutants, are strategically targeted, have a large scale of impact as measured by land area or volume of water treated or mass of pollutants removed, or that are specifically identified in the District WRAPS implementation table.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cost-effectiveness:</strong> Water quality outcomes are quantifiable, feasible, and affordable on a mass of pollutant/dollar basis. Project results in demonstrated savings as part of a related project.</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Project Readiness/Timing:</strong> Clear, realistic implementation timeline. Priority will be given to projects with a limited time window for implementation (e.g. work as part of a planned road reconstruction every 15+ years).</td>
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<td><strong>Secondary benefits:</strong> Extra points given for projects with secondary benefits such as flood mitigation or protection, public engagement opportunities, wildlife habitat enhancement, for example.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL POSSIBLE PROJECT SCORE</strong></td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There are 3 issues and concerns the Board should be aware of:

**ISSUES/CONCERNS**

1. **Scoring Results & Funding Recommendations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title (Applicant)</th>
<th>Average score out of 30</th>
<th>Water Quality Benefits &amp; Other Notes</th>
<th>Funding Recommendation (requested amount)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Foley culvert replacement-fish passage (Coon Rapids) | 19.0                     | • Improved habitat connectivity allowing fish/invertebrate passage to address aquatic life impairment  
• Limited-time opportunity in conjunction with planned road project | $50,000  
($50,000) |
| Goose Management (Coon Rapids) | 18.2                     | • Targeted reductions of E. coli and TP loading to Coon Creek  
• Improved aesthetics/recreation | $3,000  
($3,000) |
| Aberdeen construction (Ham Lake) | 17.3                     | • Reduced TSS & TP loading to Coon Creek  
• Increased storage volume in a drainage-sensitive area  
• Amount requested exceeds the cost of project elements above and beyond permit requirements. 1/2’ sump insufficient, but would fund 4’ sump. 50% of eligible items totals $10,000 with 4’ sump or $4,000 without sump | Up to $10,000  
($50,000) |
| Joma Plow Blades (Coon Rapids) | 16.7                     | • Reduced salt use & chloride loading to streams at high-risk of impairment  
• Reduced wear and tear on road surfaces & related erosion  
• Improved public safety  
• Amount requested does not meet 50% match requirement; will fund half of request if the applicant funds half | $11,200  
($22,400) |
| Tronson Creek stabilization-native plantings (Coon Rapids) | 14.8                     | • Culvert replacement has minimal water quality benefit/ Coon creek is not at high-risk for chloride impairment  
• Insufficient information on existing erosion and details of regrading/buffer establishment | $0  
($50,000) |

**TOTAL** $74,200

2. **Fund Balance**

Upon approval of the $74,200 in cost share awards recommended by Staff, there would be $25,800 in budgeted funds remaining. Staff is aware of at least 3 other projects.
proposed by interested parties and recommends issuing a second RFP for an additional round of funding.

3. **Lessons Learned**
Upon reviewing proposals during the pilot year of this program, it became apparent that:

   a. Our application template could be improved to better capture the project details necessary for evaluation against our scoring criteria. The relatively low scores out of 30 largely reflect limitations of the applications received (e.g. missing information, unclear budgets), not weaknesses of the proposed projects. Program feedback has been collected by Staff and the District Engineer and will be collected from local partners to evaluate the policy and procedures going forward.

   b. The newness of the program and timing of the RFPs limited the number of applications received. Posting the RFP in the fall or winter would align better with municipal project planning timelines.

**PRIOR DECISIONS**
1. **September 10, 2018:** Approval of the 2019 budget including $100,000 to implement a cost share program to address water quality impairments

2. **December 10, 2018:** Approval to issue a RFP for 2019 water quality cost-share program

**OPTIONS**
1. Award cost-share funds to 4 projects in accordance with Staff recommendations

2. Award cost-share funds to 4 projects in accordance with Staff recommendations and direct staff to issue a second RFP

3. Award cost-share funds to projects in accordance with amended recommendations as follows:

4. Do not award cost-share funds

**RECOMMENDATION**
Award cost share funds to 4 projects for the amounts listed and direct staff to issue a second RFP