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**Title:** Authorization to Amend Five Vegetation Maintenance Contracts to Extend Work through 2024

**Resolution number:** 24-022

**Prepared by:** Name: Josh Wolf  
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**Reviewed by:** Chuck Holtman, Legal Counsel

**Recommended action:** Authorization to amend a contract with Landbridge Ecological with a scope of services for one year of vegetation maintenance at the Minnehaha Creek Greenway sites and a contract with a scope of services for one year of vegetation maintenance at the Pond Buffers & Shoreline sites; authorization to amend a contract with Prairie Restorations, Inc. with a scope of services for one year of vegetation maintenance at the Six Mile Marsh Prairie Restoration and Laketown Wetland sites; authorization to amend a contract with Minnesota Native Landscapes with a scope of services for one year of vegetation maintenance at the West & Southwest sites; and authorization to amend a contract with Natural Shore Technologies with a scope of services for one year of vegetation maintenance at the CR 101 Shoreline and Jennings Bay Wetland sites.

**Schedule:** April 2024: Amend contracts  
April 2024 – December 2024: Vegetation maintenance performed

**Budget considerations:** Fund name and code: Project Maintenance & Land Management, 2003-4340  
Fund budget: \$689,986.00  
Expenditures to date: \$9,754.00  
Requested amount of funding: \$189,436

**Past Board action:**

- Res # 19-034 Authorization to Enter into Four Contracts for Vegetation Maintenance at 25 sites
- Res # 21-026 Authorization to Execute a Contract for Six Mile Marsh Prairie and Laketown Wetland Vegetation Maintenance
- Res # 22-019 Authorization to Extend Five Vegetation Maintenance Contracts through 2022
- Res #23-019 Authorization to Amend Five Vegetation Maintenance Contracts to Extend Work Through 2023

**Summary:**

In 2003, the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) adopted a policy in which vegetation established as part of capital project implementation is actively maintained. This action was taken in response to discovering that project partners may not have the expertise, budget, or oversight needed for ongoing vegetation maintenance. MCWD is best equipped to ensure the maintenance undertaken is regular and consistent across projects. As more recent projects reached the end of their warranty period, and maintenance and management goals were refined for MCWD lands, the number of managed vegetation sites increased to 27 sites.

In 2021, the Board authorized a two-year contract, through 2022, for vegetation maintenance grouping the 27 sites into five contract scopes arranged by geography and similar vegetation maintenance needs. See table below:

Landbridge Ecological \$39,544	Prairie Restorations, Inc. \$32,285	Landbridge Ecological \$49,172	Minnesota Native Landscapes \$61,285	Natural Shore Technologies \$7,150
Minnehaha Creek Greenway Sites (4 sites)	SMMRP & Laketown (2 sites)	Pond Buffers & Shorelines Sites (11 sites)	West & Southwest Sites (8 sites)	CR 101 Shoreline & Jennings Bay Wetland (2 sites)
Cottageville Park	Six Mile Marsh Prairie Restoration	Nokomis Gateway Pond	Long Lake Creek Wetland	CR 101 Causeway Shoreline
Minnehaha Preserve (Reach 20)	Laketown Wetland	Nokomis Amelia Pond	Independence Wetland	Jennings Bay Wetland Restoration
Minnehaha Creek Preserve Enhancement (Japs Olson)		Nokomis Knoll Pond	Johnson / Rolling Hills Restoration	
Methodist Hospital Wetland Restoration		SW Bde Maka Ska Ponds	County Road 26 Remeander (Waldera Barkus)	
		Cedar Meadows Pond	Chute Property	
		Twin Lakes Pond	Rye Property	
		Long Lake Ponds and Shoreline	Gould Property	
		Our Lady of the Lake Rain Garden	Steiger Wetland	
		Gideon Glen		
		Minnehaha Creek Headwaters Shoreline		
		MCWD Office Buffer		

The contracts in the groupings above were extended for one year at the April 27, 2023 Board Meeting and the scope of work for each of these five contracts was completed on December 31, 2023. In 2024, in conjunction with the creation of a data management database, staff plans to reassess MCWD's approach to vegetation maintenance at each capital project and land management site and recommend a revised approach for 2025 and beyond. With the planned review to occur in 2024, for implementation starting in 2025, staff recommends amending the contracts to add scopes of work for 2024.

MCWD staff solicited quotes for vegetation maintenance in 2024 from the current four contractors. Each of these quotes was reviewed individually and compared against the quotes from the previous one-year contract amendment costs. Staff finds that each contractor has performed the work to date in a competent and efficient manner and finds that the quotes received are reasonable and reflects efficiencies of each contractor's familiarity with the management sites. While this year's contract amendments were not determined competitively, the original contracts were determined via a competitive quote process. Sole sourcing of the contracts for 2024 realizes administrative efficiencies in the face of PMLM staff shortages and allows for a detailed analysis of the vegetation management for all District capital projects, lands, and easements to be completed in Fall 2024 ahead of a competitive quote process for 2025 and beyond with a likely restructuring of management groupings and priorities.

Staff recommends approval of the following contract amendments:

- Amend the Minnehaha Creek Greenway Sites contract with Landbridge Ecological to add one year of vegetation maintenance in the amount of \$39,544; and
- Amend the Six Mile Marsh Prairie Restoration & Laketown Wetland contract with Prairie Restorations, Inc. to add one year of vegetation maintenance in the amount of \$32,285; and
- Amend the Pond Buffers & Shorelines Sites contract with Landbridge Ecological to add one year of vegetation maintenance in the amount of \$49,172; and
- Amend the West & Southwest Sites contract with Minnesota Native Landscapes to add one year of vegetation maintenance in the amount of \$53,350 and establish a not-to-exceed budget of \$61,285 (this contingency allows for the optional burn and enhanced seeding of the Rye property and an optional burn of the Gould property); and
- Amend the County Road 101 & Jennings Bay Wetland contract with Natural Shore Technologies to add one year of vegetation maintenance in the amount of \$4,650 and establish a not-to-exceed amount of \$7,150 (this contingency allows optional buckthorn removal at the CR 101 Causeway).

The \$189,436 budget for 2024 is in line with the recent annual vegetative maintenance costs and within the 2024 budgeted amount. This year's cost contains several optional prescribed burns for the total cost of \$10,435. Staff will determine the feasibility and necessity of these optional tasks based on site assessment and available windows for prescribed burns afforded by seasonal weather. When comparing the 2024 budget with the optional prescribed burns omitted (\$179,001), the 2024 budget represents an increase of 6% over the 2023 costs (\$168,732) which is comparative to other programmatic inflationary costs for 2024.



## RESOLUTION

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- WHEREAS, the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) engages in regional capital improvement projects as described in its Water Resources Management Plan;
- WHEREAS, the MCWD Board of Managers (“Board”) has a maintenance policy under which MCWD retains the responsibility for maintenance of vegetation planted in conjunction with capital projects;
- WHEREAS, in 2021 and 2022, MCWD entered into five contracts for vegetation maintenance at the Minnehaha Creek Greenway sites, the Six Mile Marsh Prairie & Laketown sites, the Pond Buffers & Shoreline sites, the West & Southwest sites, and the CR 101 Shoreline & Jennings Bay Wetland sites;
- WHEREAS, in 2023, MCWD amended the five contracts for vegetation maintenance each with a scope of services for one year of vegetation maintenance and the work for these contracts was complete on December 31, 2023;
- WHEREAS, in 2024, staff will reassess MCWD’s approach to vegetation maintenance in conjunction with the development of a data management database and recommend a revised approach for 2025 and beyond;
- WHEREAS, staff recommends amending the five contracts for vegetation maintenance at the Minnehaha Creek Greenway sites, the Six Mile Marsh Prairie & Laketown sites, the Pond Buffers & Shoreline sites, the West & Southwest sites, and the CR 101 Shoreline & Jennings Bay Wetland sites to extend them until December 31, 2024 and incorporate a supplemental scope of services for 2024;
- WHEREAS, staff has obtained a quote from Land Bridge Ecological for one year of vegetation maintenance at the Minnehaha Creek Greenway sites for \$39,544;
- WHEREAS, staff has obtained a quote from Prairie Restorations, Inc. for one year of vegetation maintenance at the Six Mile Marsh and Laketown sites for \$32,285;
- WHEREAS, staff has obtained a quote from Land Bridge Ecological for one year of vegetation maintenance at the Pond Buffers and Shoreline sites for \$49,172;
- WHEREAS, staff has obtained a quote from Minnesota Native Landscapes for one year of vegetation maintenance at the West and Southwest sites for \$61,285;
- WHEREAS, staff has obtained a quote from Natural Shore Technologies for one year of vegetation maintenance at the CR 101 Shoreline and Jennings Bay Wetland sites for \$7,150;
- WHEREAS, staff finds that the work completed by the contracted firms under the existing contracts has been satisfactory and further finds, on the basis of past scopes of work, that the quotes are reasonable, and that the contractors’ familiarity with the sites will allow for the work to be performed efficiently and

within the necessary schedule, and the Board concurs that it therefore is appropriate to proceed on the basis of quotes received;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board authorizes the District Administrator, on advice of legal counsel, to amend a contract with Landbridge Ecological with a scope of services for one year of vegetation maintenance at the Minnehaha Creek Greenway sites in the amount of \$39,544; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the District Administrator is authorized, on advice of legal counsel, to amend a contract with Prairie Restorations with a scope of services for one year of vegetation maintenance at the Six Mile Marsh Prairie Restoration and Laketown Wetland sites in the amount of \$32,285; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the District Administrator is authorized, on advice of legal counsel, to amend a contract with Landbridge Ecological with a scope of services for one year of vegetation maintenance at the Pond Buffers and Shoreline sites in the amount of \$49,172; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the District Administrator is authorized, on advice of legal counsel, to amend a contract with Minnesota Native Landscapes with a scope of services for one year of vegetation maintenance at the West and Southwest sites in the amount of \$61,285; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the District Administrator is authorized, on advice of legal counsel, to amend a contract with Natural Shore Technologies with a scope of services for one year of vegetation maintenance at the CR 101 Shoreline and Jennings Bay Wetland sites in the amount of \$7,150; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the District Administrator is authorized, in his judgment, to further authorize up to an additional \$18,943, in aggregate under the above contracts.

Resolution Number 24-022 was moved by Manager \_\_\_\_\_, seconded by Manager \_\_\_\_\_. Motion to adopt the resolution \_\_\_ ayes, \_\_\_ nays, \_\_\_ abstentions. Date: 4/11/2024

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Secretary Date: \_\_\_\_\_