



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:18-2825

Agenda Item Number: 12.

Agenda Date: 5/10/2018

In Control: City Council A Session

DEPARTMENT: Parks and Recreation

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Xavier D. Urrutia

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: City Wide

SUBJECT:

Edwards Aquifer Protection Program - Conservation Easement Acquisition for Voges Ranch

SUMMARY:

Consideration of an ordinance authorizing payment in the amount of \$721,830.00 to Dennis W. Voges and Nannette L. Voges as Trustees for the Sage B Trust for title on a conservation easement, due diligence and closing costs on the Voges Ranch, a 433.37 acre tract of land located over the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone in Medina County.

This action also authorizes the execution of necessary documents to accomplish said acquisition.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The purpose of the Edwards Aquifer Protection Program is to obtain property rights by fee simple purchase or conservation easement over the sensitive zones of the Edwards Aquifer. This program was initiated in May 2000 when voters approved Proposition 3, a 1/8-cent sales tax venue up to \$45 million for the acquisition of lands over the Edwards Aquifer for parks and watershed protection. Proposition 3 ran from 2000 through 2005 and was limited to Bexar County. The 2005 Proposition 1 program was an extension of the initial voter-approved Edwards Aquifer protection endeavor and was extended by voters in 2010 and renewed again in 2015. Changes in state legislation allowed watershed protection activities to expand outside of Bexar County.

The proposed purchase of a conservation easement on the Voges Ranch tract is located over the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone in Medina County. The property was initially identified through use of the Scientific

Evaluation Team's GIS Spatial Model and subsequent site visits identified favorable recharge features on the properties which are located within prioritized watersheds. The Voges Ranch is located within the Hondo Creek watershed which, combined with caves, faults, and fractures, contribute to significant recharge of the Edwards Aquifer. The Edwards Aquifer Authority issued a geological assessment of the properties confirming that preservation of the Voges Ranch would provide very high water quantity and high water quality benefits for the City of San Antonio.

If approved, inclusion of this property will increase the total protected lands under the City's aquifer protection program by 433.37 acres for a total of 152,555 acres.

ISSUE:

This ordinance authorizes payment in the amount of \$721,830.00 to Dennis W. Voges and Nannette L. Voges as Trustees for the Sage B Trust for title on a conservation easement, due diligence and closing costs on the Voges Ranch, a 433.37 acre tract of land located over the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone in Medina County.

Acquisition of this property is consistent with policy for implementation of the Proposition 1 Edwards Aquifer Protection Venue Project as approved by voters. The City Council-appointed Conservation Advisory Board reviewed and recommended the acquisition of this conservation easement at the January 24, 2018 meeting.

ALTERNATIVES:

Acquisition could be deferred until a later date subject to the property owner's willingness to sell real estate interests and future market conditions. Additionally, other properties could be prioritized for acquisition foregoing this conservation easement and losing the very high water quality and high quantity benefits and the opportunity to protect additional acreage within the Hondo Creek watershed.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This acquisition is a one-time expenditure in the amount of \$721,830.00 and has been approved through the FY 2018-FY 2023 Capital Improvement Plan. Funding is available in the 2015 Parks Edwards Aquifer Land Acquisition Venue projects.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the acquisition of a conservation easement on the 433.37 acre tract of land known as the Voges Ranch for a total of \$721,830.00 under the Proposition 1 Edwards Aquifer Protection Venue Project.

The Contracts Disclosure Form required by the Ethics ordinance is attached.