



County of Monterey

Board of Supervisors
Chambers
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor
Salinas, CA 93901

Board Report

File #: 12-298, **Version:** 1

- a. Approve Amendment to the Marks Ranch Grazing Lease, to the Big Sur Land Trust (BSLT);
- b. Authorize the Chair of the Board to execute the Lease Amendment; and
- c. Authorize a continuation of a 100% offset of lease payments in consideration of infrastructure improvements and stewardship, resource management and habitat restoration services provided by BSLT.

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors:

- a. Approve Amendment to the Marks Ranch Grazing Lease, to the Big Sur Land Trust (BSLT);
- b. Authorize the Chair of the Board to execute the Lease Amendment; and
- c. Authorize a continuation of a 100% offset of lease payments in consideration of infrastructure improvements and stewardship, resource management and habitat restoration services provided by BSLT.

Summary/Discussion:

On October 18, 2011, the Board of Supervisors (BOS) approved a 10-Year cattle lease with a 10-Year renewable option, to the BSLT. In addition, the BOS authorized a 100% offset of lease payments in consideration of infrastructure improvements and stewardship, resource management and habitat restoration services provided by BSLT.

On March 20, 2012, the BOS approved a Purchase and Sale Agreement between the BSLT and the County of Monterey (County) for the County's acquisition of a 113.4 acre portion of Marks Ranch (Zone 1). Per Section 1.1.5 of the Purchase and Sale Agreement, the County has negotiated an Amendment to the Marks Ranch Cattle Grazing Lease to make Zone 1 subject to the original Marks Ranch Cattle Grazing Lease, to the extent environmentally appropriate. The purpose of the cattle lease amendment is to restore and enhance the natural and ecological values of the Property.

Per Exhibit C, "Zone 1 Grazing Area", Zone 1 will be divided into 4 grazing areas, A, B, C and D. Once the County establishes a public trail on Zone 1, Areas B and C will be removed from grazing in order to facilitate public access. At that time, BSLT will install fencing to exclude cattle from the public trail and wetland areas of Zone 1. The cost of materials for the fencing shall be paid by the County and BSLT will provide the labor to install the fencing.

The lease for grazing all areas A, B, C and D of Zone 1 is equivalent to \$7.53 per acre for the total acreage of 53.42 acres or a total of \$402.25 annual per acre cost. The annual acreage will be reduced when Areas B and C are removed from grazing and the associated annual cost will be adjusted down accordingly. BSLT has requested to offset the Zone 1 grazing acreage in the same manner as provided in the Grazing Agreement approved on October 18, 2011. The offset is based on stewardship management services in lieu of annual rental payments for the life of the lease as follows:

1. BSLT contracted with David Amme, a grazing specialist with East Bay Regional Parks, to prepare a grazing plan for Marks Ranch at a cost of \$45,000. BSLT will implement the recommendations which reflect current

best practices in habitat preservation for range lands.

2. Implementation of the grazing infrastructure will optimize underutilized grasslands. BSLT staff will manage the ranchers at the site and monitor the impacts of the grazing program on the natural resources on site. This will save County resources otherwise needed for the services of an ecologist and/or biologist.

3. BSLT will provide on-going services through the life of the lease, including the repair and maintenance of grazing related improvements and road improvements that decrease erosion and trail maintenance.

Other Agency Involvement

County Counsel, County’s Contract and Purchasing Division, have been involved and have concurred with the process. County Counsel has reviewed and approved the amendment to the lease.

Financing

The Parks Department will be responsible for purchasing materials for fencing to exclude cattle from the premises of the Zone 1 public access trail. It is estimated that this cost will be \$3,500.

Prepared by:

Approved by:

Meg Clovis, 831-755-4913
Cultural Affairs Manager

John J. Pinio, 831-755-4895
Director of Parks

Date: _____

Date: _____

- Attachment: First Amendment to Cattle Grazing Lease
Exhibit A: Cattle Grazing Lease County of Monterey Zone 4 of Marks Ranch
Exhibit B: Legal Description
Exhibit C: Zone 1 Grazing Area Map