



County of Monterey

Item No.48

Board Report

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

Legistar File Number: 26-418

July 07, 2026

Introduced: 4/29/2026

Current Status: General Government -
Consent

Version: 1

Matter Type: General Agenda Item

- a. Approve and authorize the Agricultural Commissioner or designee to execute a non-standard retroactive work plan between the County of Monterey and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) pursuant to Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services (APHIS-WS) Agreement Number: 26-7306-5243-RA APHIS-WS WBS: AP.RA.RX06.73.0152 to provide wildlife damage management assistance to agricultural operators and private landowners for a total agreement amount not to exceed \$202,154 for the term July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027;
- b. Approve and authorize the Agricultural Commissioner or designee to execute up to three future amendments that do not exceed 15% (\$30,323) of the original agreement amount, do not significantly change the scope of services and do not increase the total not to exceed amount over \$232,477 annually; and
- c. Find that the Plan is both within the scope of, and adequately addressed by, the California Department of Food and Agriculture's certified Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement for the California Wildlife Damage Management Project, and that pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15162 no subsequent or supplemental Environmental Impact Report is required.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors:

- a. Approve and authorize the Agricultural Commissioner or designee to execute a non-standard retroactive work plan between the County of Monterey and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) pursuant to Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services (APHIS-WS) Agreement Number: 26-7306-5243-RA APHIS-WS WBS: AP.RA.RX06.73.0152 to provide wildlife damage management assistance to agricultural operators and private landowners for a total agreement amount not to exceed \$202,154 for the term July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027;
- b. Approve and authorize the Agricultural Commissioner or designee to execute up to three future amendments that do not exceed 15% (\$30,323) of the original agreement amount, do not significantly change the scope of services and do not increase the total not to exceed amount over \$232,477 annually; and
- c. Find that the Plan is both within the scope of, and adequately addressed by, the California Department of Food and Agriculture's certified Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement for the California Wildlife Damage Management Project, and that pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15162 no subsequent or supplemental Environmental Impact Report is required.

SUMMARY:

The County and USDA APHIS-WS have entered into an annual USDA APHIS WILDLIFE SERVICES WORK AND FINANCIAL PLAN pursuant to an APHIS-WS Agreement since 1997. The proposed agreement by USDA APHIS-WS for FY 2026/27 is in the amount of \$202,154 and provides for wildlife damage management assistance to agricultural operations and private landowners.

DISCUSSION:

The purpose of the agreement between the County and USDA APHIS-WS is to reduce or manage predatory and nuisance wildlife that presents a risk to human health and safety and protect food safety in agricultural commodities from the potential contamination of *E.coli* bacteria and other harmful organisms from wild boar populations. Timely access to Wildlife Services support is essential for landowners and growers to address these risks effectively and reduce and prevent damage to property. USDA APHIS-WS provides the public with technical assistance including advice, recommendations, information, and training in managing wildlife problems. USDA APHIS-WS also provides direct management of wildlife when a property owner's efforts have been ineffective or technical assistance is not sufficient. As part of this work, USDA APHIS-WS also conducts disease monitoring in wildlife that may threaten human health, agriculture and other wildlife. Disease surveillance serves as a first line of defense to inform on diseases and pathogens that can have an impact on human health and animal populations. Some of this work includes monitoring for avian influenza, plague, and swine brucellosis. Constituents, growers, and landowners may be referred to Wildlife Services directly, or through the Agricultural Commissioner's Office or other agricultural industry organizations such as the Farm Bureau and Grower-Shipper Association of Central California.

The total cost of the work plan for conducting the program within the County is \$288,790.17. As part of the State and Federal partnership with the County, funds are provided to create a 30% cost share. The resulting cost of the agreement to the Agricultural Commissioner is \$202,154.00. The source of funding for the agreement is approximately 25% General Fund Contributions from the Agricultural Commissioner's Office budget and 75% from state funds that support local agricultural programs. The Agricultural Commissioner's Office is also requesting the authority to execute future agreements with APHIS-WS for three additional fiscal years, ending in fiscal year 2029-30, on the condition these agreements do not substantially change the scope of work for services and do not result in more than a 15% cost increase to the Agricultural Commissioner's Office from the FY 2026-27 agreement terms.

The Agricultural Commissioner's Office is requesting approval and authorization to enter into the proposed Agreement in the amount of \$202,154.00 and authorization for the Agricultural Commissioner or designee to enter into three additional agreements as proposed above.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Action:

Under CEQA, the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) prepared a Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Statewide Wildlife Services Program and certified that EIR in August 2024. The Final EIR/EIS, with comments, is available on CEQAnet at:

<https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/Project/2020099012>

Pursuant to the CEQA Guidelines Section 15168(a), a program EIR is an EIR which may be prepared on a series of actions that can be characterized as one large project and are related in one of several ways including:

- (3) In connection with issuance of rules, regulations, plans, or other general criteria to govern the conduct of a continuing program, or
- (4) As individual activities carried out under the same authorizing statutory or regulatory authority and having generally similar environmental effects which can be mitigated in similar ways.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15168(c) provides that a program EIR can be used to examine “later activities in the program . . . in light of the program EIR to determine whether an additional environmental document must be prepared.” If an agency finds that a later activity would both fall within the scope of the project covered by the program EIR and that, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15162, no subsequent EIR is required, the agency can “tier” from the program EIR, meaning it can rely on that program EIR’s analysis as effectively its own, satisfying CEQA.

CDFA’s Final EIR evaluated the Proposed Project and five alternatives. The Final EIR considered the Proposed Project in relation to several counties, including the County of Monterey:

CEQA Guidelines Section 15162 provides that when either an EIR has been certified or a Negative Declaration adopted, no subsequent EIR is required unless "substantial evidence" shows that:

- (1) Substantial changes are proposed in the project which will require major revisions of the previous EIR or negative declaration due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects;
- (2) Substantial changes occur with respect to the circumstances under which the project is undertaken which will require major revisions of the previous EIR or negative declaration due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects; or
- (3) New information of substantial importance, which was not known and could not have been known with the exercise of reasonable diligence at the time the previous EIR was certified as complete or the negative declaration was adopted,

The proposed USDA APHIS WILDLIFE SERVICES WORK AND FINANCIAL PLAN pursuant to APHIS-WS Agreement Number: 26-7306-5243-RA APHIS-WS WBS: AP.RA.RX06.73.0152 (Agreement or Project) is consistent with the Environmental Checklist for California Counties Wildlife Damage Management Project, including the CDFA’s CCR CEQA Guidelines Section 15162 findings dated May 9, 2025, as indicated in the attached NOD and Checklist prepared by the Monterey County Agricultural Commissioner’s Office.

The Project can adequately rely on the EIR/EIS for the California Wildlife Damage Management Project dated May 2024 (SCH 2020099012) as described in the Environmental Checklist for California Counties Wildlife Damage Management Project including CDFA’s CCR CEQA Guidelines Section 15162 findings dated May 9, 2025. In reliance on CDFA’s Program EIR/EIS, an NOD was

prepared by the Monterey County Agricultural Commissioner’s Office and filed with the County Clerk and the Governor’s Office of Land Use & Climate Innovation, State Clearinghouse on June 1, 2026.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT/COMMITTEE ACTIONS:

The USDA APHIS-WS concurs with this recommendation. The proposed Agreement is a USDA APHI-WS standard form prepared by the USDA APHIS-WS. The proposed Agreement has been reviewed as to form and liability provisions by the Office of the County Counsel-Risk Management. The Auditor-Controller’s Office has reviewed the proposed Agreement as to fiscal provisions.

FINANCING:

There will be no increase to the General Fund Contribution from approval of this action as the funds for this agreement are included in the Agricultural Commissioner’s (281001) FY 2026-27 Adopted Budget. Ongoing funding is subject to availability as determined through the County’s annual budget review and approval process.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS:

This initiative aligns with the Board’s Safe and Resilient Communities goal by supporting public safety and environmental protection.

- Well-Being and Quality of Life
- Sustainable Infrastructure for the Present and Future
- Safe and Resilient Communities
- Diverse and Thriving Economy
- Dynamic Organization and Employer of Choice

Prepared by: Henry Esler, Finance Manager, X7381

Approved by: Juan Hidalgo, Agricultural Commissioner, x7302

Attachments:

1. Board Report
2. APHIS-WS Non-Standard Agreement
3. County of Monterey’s NOD - also on file with the County Clerk and State Clearinghouse
4. Checklist prepared by the Monterey County Agricultural Commissioner’s Office