



MARIN COUNTY
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June 06, 2017

Board of Supervisors
Marin County Parks
3501 Civic Center Drive
San Rafael, CA 94903

SUBJECT: RECEIVE A PRESENTATION ON THE “THINK BEFORE YOU SPRAY” CAMPAIGN

Dear Board Members:

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive staff presentation.

SUMMARY:

This item follows an update provided to your board on March 21, 2017. In response to community-wide concern regarding the use of toxins in the landscape, on June 22, 2016, your board authorized funding in the amount of \$100,000 to collaborate with community members to develop and implement a two-year campaign focused on raising awareness of the impacts of and alternatives to pesticide use in residential yards and gardens. An additional grant from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in the amount of \$90,040 was secured through a collaborative agreement with the San Francisco Estuary Partnership in September 2016 to provide advertising and campaign development support. A twenty-seven member coalition (hereinafter “coalition”) representing landscape professionals, educators, students, healthcare professionals, non-profit professionals, county staff, and others, has been working together to guide campaign development and implementation.

The campaign, titled “Think Before you Spray,” was launched in mid-April and focuses on reducing the use of herbicides to manage or eradicate weeds in Marin’s residential yards and gardens. Campaign development was informed by a countywide survey, coalition input, and the advertising expertise of Gigantic Idea Studio, and encourages residents to pause and think about their options to address weed control before spraying an herbicide. Advertising and outreach efforts focus attention on the campaign website “yardsmartmarin.org” which offers a variety of educational resources on alternatives to applying herbicides.

Campaign advertising is displayed on county bus stops, in local newspapers, and online. The coalition formed action teams of volunteers to complement the advertising

strategy with grassroots outreach efforts using social media, posters, and postcards with the "Think Before You Spray" message. Gigantic Idea Studio will perform an assessment of campaign impact beginning in July 2017, and will report on the number of residents reached, indicators of behavior change, and which advertising and outreach strategies were the most effective.

Campaign start-up expenses for the first year totaled \$136,040 and included costs related to campaign development, early facilitation support when forming the coalition, and development of the website. The cost to the county was largely offset by the \$90,040 EPA grant, leaving the total county contribution at \$46,000 for the first of a two year effort. Grant-supported campaign advertising will cease in June 2017, however, the coalition will continue outreach efforts while advertising is planned for the second year. Advertising in the second year will focus again on promoting the "Think Before You Spray" campaign and educational information available through the campaign may be expanded to include options for reducing the use of other harmful pest control methods.

FISCAL/STAFFING IMPACT:

Sufficient funds exist to support current campaign activities in MUNIS Project 52PESTICID. Staff may return to your board in July 2017 to request additional funds to support year two campaign advertising and outreach efforts.

REVIEWED BY:

- Department of Finance N/A
- County Counsel N/A
- Human Resources N/A

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Chamberlain
Assistant Director

MUNIS: Project 52PESTICID