



GREAT REDWOOD TRAIL AGENCY

MEETING DATE: September 18, 2025

AGENDA ITEM: 7. Professional Services Agreement with CalTrout for Eel River Great Redwood Trail Restoration and Conservation Plan Case Study – Dos Rios to Alderpoint

FROM: Elaine Hogan

RE: Professional Services Agreement with CalTrout for Eel River Great Redwood Trail Restoration and Conservation Plan Case Study – Dos Rios to Alderpoint

BACKGROUND:

GRTA's enabling legislation allows and encourages us to utilize "the services of conservation organizations for projects related to trails, fishing access, fish passage barrier restoration, and other environmental enhancement, restoration, and improvement projects." Given our landholdings' proximity to the Eel River and community and tribal feedback received during the master planning process, restoration of the Eel River is an important priority. Staff are committed to integrating restoration into trail development. We recognize the need for assistance in establishing our agency's restoration and conservation goals for the Eel River Canyon.

CalTrout is a nonprofit 501 (c)(3) and is the director and lead organization for a program developing a Basin wide Restoration and Conservation Prioritization Plan for the Eel River. They are also actively conducting publicly funded conservation and restoration projects. CalTrout is coordinating with state agencies, county representatives, tribes, and community organizations across the Eel River watershed to inform the CDFW-funded Phase 2 of the Eel River Restoration and Conservation Program. Their work includes four coordinated areas of study:

1. Restoration and Conservation Prioritization Implementation: a quantitative process to identify the most important areas for restoration and conservation actions in the watershed
2. Eel River Restoration Program Formation
3. Invasive Pikeminnow Suppression in the South Fork Eel River
4. Development of a Fisheries Management and Monitoring Plan for the entire watershed.

They have a broad conservation partner network, including strong relationships with Natural Resource Agencies, that help ensure their work is integrated into regional conservation efforts and communicated across a number of platforms. CalTrout employs 63 staff members, builds on science enabled by research partnerships with six universities, and utilizes the skills of over 100 qualified contractors. With 10 project offices around the state, they have built strong, broad-based coalitions providing solutions to complex resource challenges.

GRTA staff have been working with CalTrout over the past few months to define an initial scope of work to help guide our approach to restoration. The result of the work proposed under this agreement will be a prioritized checklist and maps that the GRTA Board of Directors and staff can utilize to identify and prioritize restoration projects to be incorporated into segment level trail development in the Eel River watershed using the forthcoming Eel River Restoration and Conservation Program (ERRCP) Phase 2 Restoration and/or Conservation Action Plans CalTrout is producing under a grant from California

Department of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW). Because of their unique experience, skill, and mission, GRTA is recommending a sole-source agreement with CalTrout under the terms of the NCRA policy handbook which allow the Board to determine that such factors may justify contracting with specialized service providers without performing a competitive procurement process.

With the onboarding of our Trail Development Manager, GRTA's Trail Development Division will work with the Board to ensure policies and procedures are established to integrate restoration into trail development. The deliverables from this agreement with CalTrout will be utilized to expand GRTA's understanding of restoration opportunities along its landholdings that border the Eel River to inform future work and the planned restoration policies. The proposed deliverable will be a succinct and easy to read document, that describes how we can apply recommendations in the action plans to our landholdings.

Staff is recommending the Board authorize an agreement with CalTrout in an amount not to exceed \$75,000 for the restoration planning project described herein, and delegate authority to the Executive Director to make minor contract amendments as the needs of the project may require.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

By entering into a professional services agreement with CalTrout, GRTA will receive a case study that explains how we can use the forthcoming Eel River Restoration and Conservation Program (ERRCP) restoration and conservation action plans to implement restoration and conservation along portions of our property in the Eel River Canyon. We will get an overview of strategic actions that we can broadly apply in the Middle Main Eel River between Dos Rios to Alderpoint to improve restoration and conservation in locations that are likely to have the most restoration or conservation impacts.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Board find the selection of CalTrout exempt from competitive procurement processes outlined in NCRA policy handbook section 1206 due to exemption criteria for specialized services described in Handbook section 1203(6) and delegate authority to the Executive Director to enter into a Professional Services Agreement with CalTrout for a period of 29 months to implement activities described in the scope of work for the "Eel River Great Redwood Trail Restoration and Conservation Plan Case Study - Dos Rios to Alderpoint" project in an amount not to exceed \$75,000, in a form approved by counsel. Staff further recommends the Board delegate to the Executive Director the authority to make minor amendments to the contract that do not significantly change the scope or duration thereof, as may be needed.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The total contract costs for the agreement, \$75,000, will be funded via Line Item 51213 Contract Service Fees. The Fiscal Year 2025-26 budget allocated \$540,000 in funds for 51213, of which the proposed project

was included for consideration during the year. Staff does not anticipate additional impacts to the budget, requiring further Board action, to arise from approval of this agreement.

The proposals meet GRTA's needs with no anticipated additional impacts to the FY25-26 Budget, ensuring efficient use of appropriated funds for Board-approved directives.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. EXHIBIT A - SCOPE OF WORK
- B. EXHIBIT B - BUDGET



Exhibit A: Scope of Work for Eel River Great Redwood Trail Restoration and Conservation Plan Case Study – Dos Rios to Alderpoint

This scope of work describes how California Trout and their Project Team of consultants, Applied River Sciences and Stillwater Sciences, who are currently working together on prioritizing restoration and conservation action plans for the Eel River watershed, will assist GRTA to coordinate a restoration and conservation strategic overview for the GRTA project area between Dos Rios and Alderpoint in the Middle Main Eel River watershed. The restoration and conservation strategic overview will be created in the format of a case study and prioritized checklist and maps that may be used to examine how an end user such as GRTA may utilize the forthcoming Eel River Restoration and Conservation Program (ERRCP) Phase 2 Restoration and/or Conservation Action Plans to identify priority project locations in their areas of interest in the Eel River watershed. The ERRCP Action Plans are part of the deliverables of a CDFW grant and are scheduled to be completed in March 2028. This Scope of Work will be aligned with the timeline for the CDFW ERRCP grant deliverables.

Task 1 – Case Study A case study describing how entities such as the GRTA can use the ERRCP to coordinate focused restoration and conservation will be the core task of this scope of work. Broadly, the case study will be a summary that explains how a private landowner, government entity, or Tribe can use the ERRCP restoration and conservation action plans to implement restoration and conservation in their own areas of interest. Using the GRTA as an example entity, the case study will focus on an overview of strategic actions that the GRTA can broadly apply in the Middle Main Eel River between Dos Rios to Alder Point to improve restoration and conservation in locations that are likely to have the most restoration or conservation impacts in the defined area. The case study will be a succinct and easy to read document, that describes how the GRTA may apply recommendations in the action plans to their project area.

Task 2 – Prioritized checklist and maps. In addition to the case study, CalTrout will incorporate preliminary data analysis created by the ERRCP project team to build an example priority check list for high priority restoration and conservation areas in the study area. The check list will be provided to GRTA in the form of a 1–2-page report with clearly identified priority area maps for restoration and conservation actions. GRTA could then utilize this information to help incorporate restoration and conservation activities into future trail development. The Case Study and Prioritized checklist and maps will serve as guidelines to help steer GRTA restoration and conservation with priorities for the most important locations to support riparian health, fisheries recovery and will be defined in the context of basin wide goals for watershed recovery. The estimated budget assumes that the completion of Task #2 will require three days of field work including travel to ground truth tributary and mainstem intersections. The deliverables for Task #2 will be a checklist of priority restoration and conservation locations with associated maps, and a short report describing the methods used and results generated.

The Eel River watershed is a large and diverse landscape with many different landowners and Tribal ancestral lands. We recommend that all restoration and conservation practitioners incorporate Tribe consultation and review prior to implementing their proposed actions.

Potential restoration and conservation strategies (for example):

- Focus on tributary connections to mainstems
- Repair former railroad-stream intersections
- Culvert removal
- Relict infrastructure removal
- Invasive plant removal plan, - long term monitoring, early detection, rapid response
- Native plant installation, coordination with Round Valley Indian Tribes on ethnobotanical plants and other native plants representative of ancestral lands
- Off-channel habitat opportunities

Exhibit B – Budget

A. Personnel Services	Mileage or per diem	Hourly Rate	No. Hours		Approximately Oct 2025-Oct 2027
North Coast Director		\$104.00	30	\$3,120.00	
Regional Manager		\$55.00	288	\$15,840.00	2 years, at 12 hours/month average
Project Manager / GIS Analyst		\$45.00	200	\$9,000.00	2 years, at 8 hours/month average
Contract Administrator		\$62.00	30	\$1,860.00	
Administrative Assistant		\$41.00	65	\$2,665.00	
Total personnel services				\$32,485.00	
B. Subcontractors					
Subcontractor A - Applied River Sciences		\$150.00	80	\$12,000.00	2 years, at 40 hours per year, project team meetings
Subcontractor B - Stillwater Sciences		\$150.00	80	\$12,000.00	2 years, at 40 hours per year, project team meetings
Total subcontractors				\$24,000.00	
C. Operating Expenses					
Printing charges				\$100.00	
Project site visit mileage (2 @ 300 miles RT x .79)	0.79		600 miles	\$474.00	
Per diem x 2 trips x 3 people x 2 days	\$85.00		12 charges	\$1,020.00	
GIS ESRI hosting fee				\$2,000.00	
Total operating expenses				\$1,494.00	
D. Subtotals and admin					
Subtotal A+B +C (Personnel + Subcontractors + Operating)				\$57,979.00	
Required administrative overhead (24%)				\$13,914.96	
Grand total				\$71,893.96	