



CITY OF LONG BEACH

C-10

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

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September 16, 2008

HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
City of Long Beach
California

RECOMMENDATION:

Authorize the City Manager or designee to execute an agreement between the City of Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services and the United States Environmental Protection Agency for education and outreach services to reduce the consumption of contaminated fish in connection with the Palos Verdes Shelf Fish Contamination Project for the period of August 1, 2008 through July 31, 2011 and increase appropriations in the amount of \$98,689 in the Health Fund (SR 130) in the Department of Health and Human Services (HE).
(Citywide)

DISCUSSION

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) has awarded the City of Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services (Health Department) a grant in the amount of \$148,689, for the period of August 1, 2008 through July 31, 2011, to conduct market inspections of white croakers and to provide support to USEPA's overall program for the Palos Verdes Shelf, including public outreach and education, monitoring and enforcement.

The Palos Verdes Shelf United States Environmental Protection Agency Superfund site off the Los Angeles County Palos Verdes Peninsula is among the largest contaminated ocean sediment sites in the United States. Past disposal practices of carcinogenic and toxigenic chemicals, including DDT and PCB, have resulted in the accumulation of harmful levels of these substances in certain species of fish. In 1990, based on very high levels of contamination, the California Department of Fish and Game created zones off the Palos Verdes Shelf where the commercial catch of white croaker is banned. Subsequently, the USEPA's Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment issued fish consumption advisories for certain fish, including white croaker, caught within the Palos Verdes Shelf and other Southern California sites because of elevated DDT and PCB levels. In 1996, a study conducted by the Heal the Bay environmental organization showed white croaker with elevated levels of DDT and PCB being sold to the public at Asian markets in Los Angeles and Orange Counties.

The USEPA Institutional Controls draft report, issued in December 2001, determined that the immediate human health risk was of paramount importance and the most feasible action was to institute measures to convey the health risks by the contaminated sediments to those at the greatest risk.

During the first phase of the agreement, the Health Department will inspect 15 identified markets within the City of Long Beach three times per year. The 15 markets were selected based on previous inspections and their probability of selling white croaker fish. The identified markets may change at the direction of the USEPA, and the Health Department will potentially expand the inspection program to include wholesalers if USEPA determines such is needed for the overall enforcement program.

This matter was reviewed by Deputy City Attorney Linda Trang on August 21, 2008 and by Budget Management Officer Victoria Bell on September 2, 2008.

TIMING CONSIDERATIONS

City Council action is requested on September 16, 2008. The Health Department received notification of the award from the USEPA on July 16, 2008, and is currently providing services. The Health Department cannot recover costs until this agreement is approved.

FISCAL IMPACT

The total amount of the agreement is \$148,689 from August 1, 2008 through July 31, 2011 and an appropriations increase in the amount of \$98,689 has been included as part of the recommendation. The remaining balance of \$50,000 has been included in the proposed FY 09 budget. There is no fiscal impact to the General Fund.

SUGGESTED ACTION:

Approve the recommendation.

Respectfully submitted,



RONALD R. ARIAS
DIRECTOR
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

APPROVED:



PATRICK H. WEST
CITY MANAGER