



office memorandum

DATE: December 9, 2020

TO: Darrel Pyle, City Manager

THROUGH: Shawn O'Leary, Director of Public Works *SO*

FROM: Carrie Evenson, Stormwater Program Manager *ce*

SUBJECT: Approval of Interlocal Cooperative Agreement, Contract No. K-2021-51, with the Oklahoma Conservation Commission in an Amount Not to Exceed \$30,000.00 over 5 years for Lake Thunderbird Watershed Biological and Instream Habitat Monitoring

BACKGROUND:

In August 2010, the Environmental Protection Agency placed Lake Thunderbird on its 303(d) List of Impaired Waterbodies. This led to the establishment of a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) by ODEQ in November of 2013.

The TMDL established waste load allocations (WLAs) for each of the cities. These WLAs established the maximum amount of each of the key pollutants of concern, total suspended solids, total nitrogen and total phosphorus, which each city can discharge to the Lake Thunderbird watershed. The TMDL also requires the Cities of Norman, Oklahoma City, and Moore to develop and implement Compliance and Monitoring Plans describing how each city will comply with the TMDL requirements. The Compliance Plan defines the steps to be taken by the City of Norman (City) in order to reduce stormwater pollution in the watershed and meet the load reduction requirements set out in the TMDL. The Monitoring Plan defines steps the City will take to establish a baseline quantifying the amounts of pollutants in the runoff, and it also establishes a mechanism to monitor the effectiveness of Best Management Practices (BMPs) put into effect by the City as a result of its compliance efforts. ODEQ approved the City's TMDL Compliance and Monitoring Plans on September 21, 2016, and required that the Monitoring Plan be fully implemented by November 12, 2016.

Implementation of the Plans is based on a 5 year permit cycle. The City began the first 5-year cycle by implementing a Monitoring Plan to establish a baseline for flow and pollutant loading of streams flowing from or through the City to Lake Thunderbird. Biological and instream habitat monitoring will enhance the existing monitoring activities being conducted by the Oklahoma Water Resources Board and begin the process of engaging rural landowners with stream and watershed stewardship.

DISCUSSION:

The Oklahoma Conservation Commission (OCC) is the primary agency responsible for biological and instream habitat monitoring of streams in Oklahoma. As part of their Small Watershed Rotating Basin Program, OCC conducts biological and instream habitat monitoring in a majority of 11-digit watersheds located entirely within the State of Oklahoma. To further the goals of the Lake Thunderbird Watershed TMDL, the Public Works Department, Stormwater Division contacted OCC for assistance in conducting biological monitoring at approximately seven wadeable stream sites. The actual number of monitoring sites may vary depending upon the availability of stream sites with adequate

hydrologic conditions to perform bioassessment protocols and is currently under assessment by City of Norman and OCC staff.

Biological monitoring will include fish and macroinvertebrate collections, as well as a habitat assessment at each monitoring location. Protocols will follow OCC Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) that are reviewed and approved by Region VI of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) annually. OCC SOPs for biological collections are modified versions of EPA Rapid Bioassessment Protocols.

Fish collection includes a combination of seining and electrofishing, for at least 400m of stream length, during the summer index period (May 15 - October 31), once every five years. A habitat assessment is completed concurrently with the fish collection and measures the quality of in-stream and riparian zone habitat that influences the structure and function of the lotic environment. The assessment is designed to help discern the source of any identified impairments and can be used as the basis for engaging rural landowners with stream and watershed stewardship.

Staff began negotiations with OCC in July 2020. Budgeted capital funds in the amount of \$30,000.00 are available for this project in Account No. 50599968-46201, Project No. DR0061. The project is scheduled to begin in January 2021.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of Contract No. K-2021-51, between the City of Norman and the Oklahoma Conservation Commission for completion of biological and instream habitat monitoring to enhance the existing monitoring activities for the Lake Thunderbird Watershed TMDL.

Approved by:  Not Approved: _____

Reviewed by: Shawn O'Leary, Director of Public Works
Kathryn Walker, City Attorney