

Item Title: Accept and Appropriate NCDOT Funds for the Aquatic Species Propagation Facility Project at Yates Mill County Park

Specific Action Requested:
That the Board of Commissioners:

- 1. Accepts funding in the amount of \$250,000 received pursuant to the Reimbursable Agreement with NCDOT; and**
- 2. Appropriates such funding in the amount of \$250,000 for payment of design and engineering expenses related to the Aquatic Species Propagation Facility Project at Historic Yates Mill County Park.**

Item Summary:

Purpose: The Board of Commissioners appropriates all funds.

Background: In November 2017, the Board of Commissioners authorized the County Manager to enter into a Reimbursable Agreement with NCDOT providing funding for the Project, as well as a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with NC State to define the roles and responsibilities of each party in the development and operation of the Project. These agreements have subsequently been finalized. The project includes the renovation and modest expansion of the research wing of the A. E. Finley Center at Yates Mill County Park. This renovation will house and support captive breeding of aquatic species such as the endangered Dwarf Wedgemussel. This project will help ensure these species, impacted by the I-540 expansion, will continue to thrive.

Board Goal: This action supports routine County operations.

Fiscal Impact: NCDOT is providing all funding for the design and construction for the project. Once constructed, NCSU will maintain and cover any additional operational costs for the new research wing. Wake County will manage all aspects of the Project, including design development, solicitation of bids, and construction as well as continue to maintain the overall facility, which includes the new research wing and Yates Mill Park facilities.

Additional Information:

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) has been planning for the extension and eventual final connection of the I-540 outer loop for several years. Areas that will be impacted by the construction of I-540 contain aquatic systems that are home

to many rare and endangered species. In response to these environmental impacts, NCDOT agreed to certain mitigation requirements associated with construction of this final connection of I-540. As a result of a collaborative study directed by Wake County and including representatives from NCDOT, US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS), North Carolina State University (NCSU), and Yates Mill Associates, it was determined that Yates Mill Park would be an appropriate location for an aquatic species propagation facility ("Project") to meet NCDOT mitigation requirements.

Yates Mill Park and the A.E. Finley Center were selected for this work because of the ability of the pond to sustain aquatic species, the availability of space in the existing research wing (for NCSU), as well as the opportunities for partnership between the key stakeholders of Wake County, NCSU, US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC) and The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT). The study recommends a renovation of 5000 SF with construction of modest expansion space. The project scope will include an extensive amount of aquatic tank installation and associated piping, pumps, generator and other unique accommodations.

The November 2017 Board approval provided that a separate appropriation request would be made to the Wake County Board of Commissioners at a future date once final approvals and appropriation amounts for the Project were agreed upon. The Reimbursable Agreement authorizes payment for preconstruction and design costs up to \$250,000. NCDOT is now prepared to release this funding to Wake County, which will allow the final project design process to begin.

It is anticipated that the project will be ready to bid in late Fall of 2019, however, that milestone and the construction schedule will be dependent on construction funding approval by NCDOT. Staff will return to the Board of Commissioners seeking approval and appropriation of further funding at that time.

Attachments:

1. Reimbursable Agreement with NCDOT
2. Budget Memo