



CITY OF WHEATLAND

CITY COUNCIL MEETING STAFF REPORT

September 12, 2023

SUBJECT: Letter of Support for the Yuba County Water Workforce Internship Program

PREPARED BY: Bill Zenoni, City Manager

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Wheatland City Council approve a Letter of Support for the Yuba County Water Workforce Internship Program and authorize the Mayor to sign.

Background

In Yuba County, as well as nation-wide, there is an increasing shortage of young people applying for entry and mid-level level water-related jobs which has created difficulty in recruiting and training for positions in the water and wastewater sector.

Discussion

In response to this ongoing issue, the Yuba County Integrated Regional Water Management team has developed an initial program aimed at increasing local awareness of the breadth of careers that are available in the water/wastewater/stormwater/flooding/agricultural irrigation spheres and has developed a program of paid internships to support direct local training and recruitment.

The Yuba County Water Workforce Program is a proposed two-year startup program that will support the professional and personal needs of young adults in Yuba County who might be interested in a career in the water resource management industry. The goal of the Water Workforce Program is to offer local residents an entry-level internship and mentorship program to support the cultivation of long-term careers in water-related management. Programs such as this aren't readily available in today's practice, due to lack of funding and available resources. This program will provide young adults the opportunity to learn about an important and necessary career opportunity, while providing hands-on experience and support for getting certified in their chosen focus area - creating the vision and pathway to a meaningful career.

The first year of this program will focus on a pilot internship program at Olivehurst Public Utility District, expanding in Year 2 to include the City of Wheatland, North Yuba Water District, Linda County Water District, Camptonville, and Lake Francis Estates. Other entities within Yuba County will be invited to participate in the second year as well. The initial two years of funding for this program will be provided by the Yuba Water Agency. Additional federal and state funding may be available to support the ongoing program following the initial two-year startup period.

Fiscal Impact

There will be no fiscal impact to the City. All costs associated with the Water Workforce Internship Program will be funded by the Yuba Water Agency.

Conclusion

Based on the information contained in the staff report, staff recommends that the Wheatland City Council authorize the Mayor to sign the attached letter supporting the Yuba County Water Workforce Internship Program.

Attachments

1. Letter of Support – Water Workforce Internship Program



City of Wheatland

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September 12, 2023

Yuba County Water Agency
1220 F Street
Marysville, CA 95901

RE: Support for the Yuba County Water Workforce Program

Dear Yuba Water Agency Project Review Committee:

We are submitting this letter to express support for, and a desire to participate in, the Yuba County Water Workforce Program. It is our understanding that this program will focus on creating internships that support development of operational skills and a practical understanding of diverse water-related infrastructure systems across the County (water, wastewater, storm/flood water and irrigation water).

Nationwide, there has been a shortage of young people applying for entry and mid-level jobs within local water, wastewater, flood/control and irrigation systems to fill vacancies created by the retirement of long-term skilled employees. It has become increasingly difficult to recruit and train new and midlevel operators and technical support staff for agencies in Yuba County.

This pilot program will provide for recruitment of Yuba County residents to educate them on the options for development of a successful career in a water-related field via a hands-on paid internship training and mentoring experience with an emphasis on education, leading to a strong understanding of water-related operations and management practices. Such support isn't readily available in today's practice, due to lack of funding and available resources. This internship program will provide an opportunity for young adults to learn about an important and necessary career, while providing hands-on support for getting certified in their chosen focus area - creating the vision and pathway to a meaningful career.

The City of Wheatland is excited to participate in this program which will enhance and diversify our ability to both recruit new staff and support creating more professional tracks for young people in Yuba County.

Sincerely,

Rick West
Mayor