



City of Atascadero

Staff Report – City Manager’s Office

Creation of a Vector Control Program and Benefit Assessment

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Council:

1. Allow the County to provide vector control services within the Atascadero city limits; and,
2. Allow property owners within Atascadero city limits to participate in the Proposition 218 Ballot Measure to fund the program.

DISCUSSION:

Background: In June 2007, the Grand Jury released a report in which it recommended that the County conduct an educational campaign to inform residents of the need for and benefits of additional mosquito abatement and pest control, and then survey voters to determine the likelihood that a special assessment would be passed. In November of 2007, the Board of Supervisors directed its staff to conduct a public opinion survey to determine the level of support for the development of a benefit assessment that would provide permanent funding for vector control program.

In summary, the survey found that if San Luis Obispo County proceeded with a benefit assessment of \$9.80 - \$25.00 per year for a typical single-family property depending on the number of acres. The measure was supported by effective outreach to the community, and the measure would likely achieve a weighted majority of property owner support. The survey found the overall weighted support of such a benefit assessment to be 53.8%.

In addition to quantifying the level of support and at what annual rate, the survey results identified the top priorities for services as follows:

- Test and respond to disease outbreaks associated with rodents, ticks, or fleas.
- Reduce mosquito populations using environmentally safe approaches.
- Improve control of mosquitoes and the diseases they carry: West Nile Virus, Encephalitis, Dog Heartworm.

The following recommendations for a benefit assessment ballot to fund the vector control program are:

1. A vector control program funding measure.
2. The funding measure should be centered on funding a vector control program that uses environmentally safe methods to control mosquitoes/vectors and the diseases they carry.
3. An effective informational outreach focusing on the need for a stable source of funding for vector control services, and the need to control mosquitoes and other vectors and the diseases they carry is necessary to educate people about the benefits of a vector control program.

Conclusion: Staff recommends that the City Council authorize the County Health Agency to provide vector control services and allow property owners to participate in the Proposition 218 Ballot Measure to fund the program within the City of Atascadero.

FISCAL IMPACT:

No fiscal impact to the City's budget. However, City residents would be assessed an annual rate of \$9.80 - \$25.00 per single-family residence depending on the number of acres.

ATTACHMENT:

April 1, 2008 Board Letter and attached Opinion, Research and Survey.