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September 4, 2024

DECISION MEMORANDUM

TO: Council Members

FROM: John Ollis
Manager of Planning and Analysis

SUBJECT: Adequacy and Hydro Operations Modeling Support

PROPOSED ACTION: Staff recommends authorization to continue to contract with Gwendolyn Shearer in an amount not to exceed \$75,000 for adequacy modeling support throughout the fiscal year 2025.

SIGNIFICANCE: Staff are preparing a hydro operations analysis and needs assessment in 2025 in support of the upcoming power plan. This modeling leverages the Council's redeveloped GENESYS model to assess resource adequacy and understand hydro operations. In preparation for this analysis, staff are continuing to refine and enhance the GENESYS model. Continuing to contract with Ms. Shearer will expand the team's capabilities to continue model enhancement and improve the hydro operations representation in GENESYS to better understand existing system flexibility in support of the upcoming power plan.

BUDGETARY/ECONOMIC IMPACTS

For fiscal year 2025, staff recommends authorization to contract with Ms. Shearer in the amount not to exceed \$75,000. This support was included in the Council's budget for FY 2025 and expands the team's capability in the most economical way possible.

BACKGROUND

Ms. Shearer has continuously supported the Council staff in the redevelopment, testing, and running of the GENESYS model since 2010. She has deep familiarity with both classic GENESYS and redeveloped GENESYS. She is the only person outside Council staff (and the developers of the model) that understands the model and how to operate and interpret results. In addition to her extensive knowledge of GENESYS, Ms. Shearer has a deep background in pacific northwest hydropower operations.

The redeveloped GENESYS model is complex and takes more time and effort to set up and run the model. This added effort results in more meaningful analysis to inform our power system decisions of the future. Acting consistent with the Council's fiscal prudence, staff believes a focused contract with Ms. Shearer is the best approach to ensure the division continues to produce the analysis required by the Council and the region in the timeline necessary while making the most effective use of the division's budget.

ALTERNATIVES

The Council could proceed without this added contract support. This would either delay the timeline for the plan needs assessment or reduce the level of rigor for the analysis. Staff does not see a viable alternative of pursuing an alternative contractor, as the learning-curve required would be costly and less efficient, taking staff time to train up and further reduce our capacity to complete our deliverables in a timely fashion.