

Posting Language

Recommend approval of a resolution to negotiate and execute an updated interlocal agreement with the University of Texas at Austin to support implementation, management, and training for prescribed fires and other “all risk” incidents to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

Lead Department

Austin Water

Client Department

Austin Water Assistant Director of Environmental, Planning & Development Services, Kevin Critendon

Fiscal Note

This item has no fiscal impact.

Prior Council Action

August 23, 2018 - Council authorized negotiation and execution of an Interlocal Agreement with University of Texas at Austin to coordinate prescribed fire planning and implementation.

Council Committee, Boards and Commission Action

September 13, 2023 - To be reviewed by the Water & Wastewater Commission

Additional Backup Information

Austin Water’s Wildland Conservation Division (AW WCD) manages over 25,000 acres of public lands held in trust for endangered species protection and the protection of the Barton Springs recharge and contributing zones. As part of that mandate, AW WCD utilizes prescribed fire as a key land management practice on our Water Quality Protection Lands. The Division works collaboratively with many partners on these efforts, including the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center of the University of Texas at Austin.

The purpose of this agreement is to establish a framework of cooperation for each of the parties to provide mutual support, cooperation and assistance for prescribed fire management, fire prevention, fire preparedness; and for assistance on "all risk" incidents or land management activities where specific skills and/or equipment are required. It will also provide for technical support and training; and will allow each party to request equipment, personnel, and appropriate personal safety items as necessary to ensure the safety of employees participating in interagency incident management efforts. The parties understand that the resources available from the City under this agreement are limited to the resources of Austin Water, Wildland Conservation Division.

This agreement maintains a partnership that has been in place since 2011 and was formally established by interlocal agreement in 2018. This current agreement expands the partnership to include support for additional land management activities beyond prescribed fire, to take advantage of the considerable expertise of both parties.