



**San  
Lorenzo Valley**  
WATER DISTRICT

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS TO PROVIDE:**

**CONSULTING SERVICES TO THE SAN LORENZO VALLEY WATER DISTRICT**

**PROJECT TITLE:**

**General Manager Recruitment Services**

**RESPONSE DUE BEFORE 3:00 P.M. ON**

**May 18, 2023**

**San Lorenzo Valley Water District**

**13060 Highway 9  
Boulder Creek, CA 95006**

**(831) 430-4624  
rrogers@slvwd.com**

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The San Lorenzo Valley Water District is soliciting proposals from qualified professional recruitment service firms to assist the Board of Directors in the selection of a new, experienced General Manager who will serve as the chief executive officer of the District, reporting directly to the Board of Directors. The current General Manager will retire in early 2024, and the District wishes to have his replacement hired and in place no later than March 1, 2024.

## **II. SCOPE OF THE POSITION BEING RECRUITED**

The General Manager's duties and responsibilities include:

- Interface with the elected Board of Directors and other local, regional, state, federal legislative and regulatory officials who set overall policies affecting the District.
- Develop and implement, with Board approval, strategic plans for the District looking forward 5 and 10 years.
- Develop and implement a Board-approved bi-annual budget including an approximately \$13-\$15,000,000 annual operating budget and capital construction/repair expenditures of over \$50,000,000 over the next 3-5 years.
- Management of staff including the direct supervision of senior staff including (5-6 positions) and an overall staff of ~35 – 45 persons.
- Serve as lead spokesperson for the District with the press, community groups and other local officials.
- Provide effective onsite leadership and coordination of District resources along with community first responders during emergency situations such as earthquakes, floods, forest fires, etc.

## **III. PROJECT EXPECTATIONS**

- Anticipated Process
  - The Executive Search Firm will work with the Board of Directors to define qualifications and selection criteria for the ideal candidate, attract a diverse field of qualified candidates and manage the selection process through the final selection of a candidate. Upon approval of the search criteria, create and implement an aggressive search to find the right candidate.
- Specific Deliverables
  - Interface: The consultant will work with the incumbent General Manager, ad hoc committee, and the Board of Directors to accomplish the following steps.
  - Develop Position Profile: Meet with the Board of Directors and/or stakeholder groups as necessary to develop a prioritized candidate profile and a list of likely locations to search for candidates.
  - Develop A Recruiting Plan: Includes recruitment outready processes, potential candidate identification methodology, candidate evaluation process and recommendations to the board. The Board expects that we will employ a variety of recruiting techniques to find the ideal candidate, including a need to develop a recruiting brochure covering District, position, and summary job description, as well as the community and structure of the District. The consultant

will define how the brochure will be used in the advertising and recruitment phases.

- **Active Recruitment:** The consultant will perform outreach and marketing to attract a diverse field of qualified candidates and screen the candidates to present to the Board's ad-hoc recruiting committee, and Board of Directors for further consideration. Consultant will provide oral briefings and written reports on top candidates for consideration, answer questions from candidates, and collect application materials.
- **Candidate Selection.** The consultant will work with the ad-hoc committee and staff to develop structured interview questions and identify key interviewers. The consultant will facilitate initial interviews with the ad-hoc committee and internal staff, and final interviews with the Board of Directors, and coordinate interview appointments with candidates. Consultant will conduct reference checks on the top candidates.
- **Background Investigations:** The Consultant will conduct a detailed background investigation of the selected candidate including reference checks, prior employment confirmation, and a court records search. Consultant will assist in Contract Negotiations with the selected candidate(s) on behalf of the District covering the final compensation and other terms of the employment agreement.
- **Public Outreach:** Consultant, in conjunction with the District's contracted Public Relations firm and staff, will work to inform the District's customers and the community at large of the candidate selection process through social media, newsletters, and press releases.

#### **IV. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS**

The proposal shall not exceed 13 pages excluding resumes, cover letter, dividers, and front and back covers. Responses to this RFP shall be in the following order and shall include:

○ Executive Summary (1 page maximum)

Summarize the contents of your firm's proposal in a clear and concise manner.

○ Project Description (2 pages maximum)

- Explain your understanding of the District's objectives how you propose to accomplish the recognized goals.
- Describe the services and deliverables to be provided.
- Identify Project constraints. Describe any suggested enhancements to the scope and creative ideas for accomplishing the recruitment.
- Include unique characteristics of the firm's approach, experience, contacts, or social media reach that would give the firm a competitive advantage in attracting highly qualified candidates for the General Manager position.
- Describe how the firm will ensure inclusive and nondiscriminatory marketing, outreach, and selection process that is likely to result in the identification of a field of interested and vetted candidates that is representative of the diversity of qualified candidates within California.
- Describe the proposed communication frequency and methodology between the firm and the District, including the number and type of meetings to be conducted.
- Describe how you propose to handle candidates that are already known to the District (i.e.,

employees, personal friends, existing business contacts), or who approach the District directly.

- Include information on the minimum expectations and information you will need from the District to complete the project.
- Identification of Prime Consultant Firm and Subconsultants (2 pages maximum)
  - Legal name and address of the firm.
  - Legal form of firm (e.g., partnership, corporation).
  - If firm is wholly owned subsidiary of a "parent company," identify the "parent company."
  - Name, title, address, email, and telephone number of person to contact concerning the Proposal.
  - Number of staff and the discipline/job title of each.
  - If any Subconsultants will be used, provide information for items i.-v. above for each.
- Project Organization and Experience of the Project Team (3 pages maximum, not including resumes)
  - Describe proposed project organization, including identification and responsibilities of key personnel, including subconsultants. Attach resumes of key personnel (maximum one page each).
  - Describe the experience of the Project Manager and the experience that the proposed personnel have working on past projects as a team.
  - Describe project management approach to the work effort, locations where work will be done, responsibilities for coordination with the District, and lines of communication necessary to maintain schedule.
  - Describe a proposed schedule showing all facets of work that will meet the District's objectives and goals in a timely manner. Provide a proposed timeline (Gantt chart) for completion of tasks and subtasks.
  - Describe the firm's capacity to perform the work within the time limitations, considering the firm's current and planned workload and work force.
- Consultant's Past Experience (2 pages maximum)
  - Describe the firm's past experience and performance on similar projects.
  - Describe the firm's experience with water systems in the greater Bay Area and Mid-Coast regions of California and/or water systems that resemble the District's highly dispersed facilities and service area.
  - Describe the firm's experience in completing at least three (3) similar recruitment projects conducted for other public agencies in California, including the following:
    - At least one of the three similar projects listed should be for public water agencies.
    - At least one of the three similar projects listed should have been led by the Project Manager named in the proposal.
  - Include the following information about the client for each project: the client's name, project

manager/contact person, phone numbers, and email addresses for the client's point of contact.

- Provide examples of previous recruitment brochures and sample marketing plans for similar projects which may be attached as an appendix to the proposal.

○ Proposed Total Professional Fee and Fee Schedules

- Responding consultants are invited to propose a fee structure commensurate with the defined scope of work and the consultant's proposed approach. The proposal must indicate whether it is a fixed-fee basis proposal that includes all estimated project costs, including professional services, travel, printing, advertising, and other project costs.
- If the proposed fees are not inclusive of all project costs, responding consultants must include the proposed fee basis for each expense category and a not-to-exceed amount for each billable item as well as a not-to-exceed amount for the total project costs.
- The consultant should include proposed payment terms, including any offered discount if the consultant is not successful in placing a qualified candidate on or before the target date of December 31, 2023, or a replacement guarantee if the District does not retain the final selected candidate for at least one year.
- Proposed fee will not be the sole basis of award but will be used to evaluate the Consultant's understanding of the Scope of Work.

○ Exceptions to this RFP

The Consultant shall certify that it has fully read the RFP and takes no exceptions to this RFP including, but not limited to, the Consultant Services Agreement (attached). If the Consultant does take exception to any portion of the RFP, the specific portion(s) of the RFP to which exception is taken shall be identified and explained.

**V. BID PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA**

The District will consider the bidder's experience with similar placements, proposed work plan, fees and overall fit and responsiveness to the needs of the District.

**VI. PROCESS FOR SELECTION OF RECRUITING FIRM**

The District intends to interview the two top-ranked firms.

The District will enter into negotiations with the selected firm. At this time, the District contemplates the use of a Time and Material Not to Exceed contract for the services requested. Negotiations will cover: scope of work, contract terms and conditions, office arrangements, meeting requirements, proposed schedule, and appropriateness of the proposed fee.

The District will require a professional liability insurance verification for coverage of not less than \$1,000,000.00.

After negotiating a proposed agreement that is fair and reasonable, the District Manager will execute the contract with authorization from the District's Board.

**VII. SELECTION SCHEDULE**

The District anticipates that the process for selection of firm and awarding of the contract will be according to the following tentative schedule:

<b>Proposal Due Date</b>	<b>May 18, 2023</b>
Interviews and Negotiation with Selected Firm	<b>May 30, 2023</b>
Board of Directors Approval	<b>June 15, 2023</b>
Final Selection and Notification	<b>June 26, 2023</b>

#### **VIII. SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS**

- Questions regarding this RFP shall be submitted in writing to Rick Rogers [rrogers@slvwd.com](mailto:rrogers@slvwd.com).
- The response Proposal must be received no later than **3:00 p.m.** local time, on or before **May 18, 2023**.
- Please send Proposal via email to [rrogers@slvwd.com](mailto:rrogers@slvwd.com) with the subject line "Request for Proposals for San Lorenzo Valley Water District –General Manager Recruitment".
- The Proposal should be delivered in a format fully compatible with either Adobe Acrobat (pdf) or Microsoft Word.
- **Failure to comply with the requirements of this RFP may result in disqualification.**

#### **IX. APPENDIX**

- Links to documents providing background for preparation of Proposal:

[District Web Site](#)

[General Manager Job Description](#)

[Organizational Chart](#)

- The SLV Water District is Primarily a Water Supply Agency

San Lorenzo Valley Water District (SLVWD or District) is an rural/urban water supplier to approximately 23,700 customers in Santa Cruz County, California. The District's legal boundaries encompass approximately 62 square miles within the San Lorenzo River watershed. Land uses are dominantly state and regional parks and other open space, water-supply watersheds, areas zoned rural residential and low-density urban residential and commercial (including schools), along with minor quarrying, logging and agriculture. Much of the land within the legal boundaries consists of state parks and uninhabited forest, such that the District's actual service area comprises approximately 26 square miles.

The District was established in 1941, and is a Special District organized under Section 71000 of the California Water Code. The District has grown over time by the amalgamation of small mutual water systems. It currently operates and maintains two water systems, the SLVWD system and the SLVWD-Felton system, which have different service areas and water sources. The SLVWD system service area includes the unincorporated communities of Boulder Creek, Brookdale, Ben Lomond, Quail Hollow, Glen Arbor, Zayante, and Lompico, as well as the following neighborhoods in and adjacent to the city of Scotts Valley: Hidden Glen, Lockwood Lane, Pasatiempo, Whispering Pines, Manana Woods and the Spring Lakes and Vista Del Lago mobile home parks. The SLVWD-Felton system service area includes the unincorporated community of Felton and neighborhoods along Highway 9 south of Felton to Big Trees and on the west outskirts of Felton along Felton - Empire Grade Road. The two systems are connected by interties that allow transfer of water between them on an emergency basis.

The District currently employs 35 full time employees with various positions represented by AFSCME (American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees) and a management group providing their own representation.

The District relies on both surface water and groundwater resources, which are ultimately derived solely from rainfall within the San Lorenzo River watershed. Surface water is obtained from nine stream diversions (six of which are currently inactive due to damage sustained in the 2020 CZU wildfire). Groundwater is obtained from one spring and eight active wells. The District has limited above-ground storage capacity equal to only a few days' average use; hence, the District relies on groundwater for seasonal and year-to-year storage. The District produces and treats water based on short-term water demand. The water treatment plant for the SLVWD system is located above the community of Boulder Creek; the plant for the SLVWD-Felton system is located on Kirby Street in downtown Felton.

The scale and complexity of SLVWD's water distribution system reflect the San Lorenzo Valley's rugged topography, its low-density pattern of development, and widely distributed raw water sources. The resulting highly dispersed system results in the District maintaining 37 pressure zones. All but one zone include a booster station to pump potable water up to the tank(s) associated with a particular zone. The cost to run each booster station pump is mostly a function of the elevation gain between pump station and tank(s); age and design efficiency play a smaller part in determining energy expenditure. The District's dispersed layout requires that many zones are "pass-through" zones, meaning that potable water must be pumped from a treatment plant up to a zone, then pumped again up to a second, third, or even fourth zone. As a result, pumping costs differ from zone to zone.

- The District Also Operates a Small Wastewater System

The District operates the Bear Creek Estates Wastewater System, which collects and treats domestic wastewater flow from 56 homes in and around the neighborhoods along Deerwood Drive, Harmon Gulch and Timberwood Road north of the community of Boulder Creek.

From 2005 through 2013, the District completed several upgrades aimed at achieving regulatory compliance and improved efficiency of nitrogen removal. This involved modifying the existing treatment septic system to incorporate a 3-stage trickling filter system, new internal recirculation/splitter/ball valves, and new air blowers with high-capacity disc diffusers in the clarifier tanks. There are still significant improvements to the wastewater system needed to meet modern State regulatory requirements.

There are no dedicated wastewater system employees. The system is operated on a routine or as-needed basis with District staff from the Water Fund Operations & Distribution or Supply & Treatment Departments. The District is in negotiations with the County to take over operation of the wastewater system as part of a larger project in the community of Boulder Creek.

- Impacts of the CZU Lightning Complex Wildfire of 2020

The District watershed and water system, as well as some of its ratepayers, were severely impacted by the CZU Lightning Complex Wildfire in 2020. The damage to District facilities was extensive, most significantly to raw water supply lines, storage tanks, and cross-country water transmission pipelines, but also water treatment systems, pumps, and water-quality monitoring equipment.

The District anticipates receiving partial financial assistance through the Federal Emergency

Management Agency (FEMA) to help cover the costs of emergency response, recovery, and permanent repairs. The District will be responsible for paying up front all of these costs (and other CZU Wildfire costs that are not reimbursable by FEMA). Once projects are complete, the District will submit eligible project costs for FEMA reimbursement.

The District implemented a Fire Recovery Surcharge through the Proposition 218 process in August 2021 to help recover an estimated \$5M in CZU Wildfire costs not covered by FEMA. The surcharge added a monthly charge of about \$10 per ratepayer. The surcharge will last about 5 years and will automatically terminate once \$5 million is collected by the District. The \$5M surcharge amount was based on the assumptions that FEMA would reimburse 75% of an estimated \$20M cost for fire recovery and repair of damaged infrastructure.

Since the adoption of the Fire Recovery Surcharge, key assumptions on which the surcharge was based have changed. The FEMA cost-share percentage increased from 75% to 90%. The initial cost estimate of approximately \$20M in total damages has proven to be far too low, especially in light of current estimates for the cost of replacing 7 miles of above-ground, raw-water pipeline destroyed in the CZU Wildfire. A constructability study completed by the engineering firm Freyer & Laureta in 2022 evaluated various replacement options, including replacing the pipelines at grade, and recommended that the destroyed pipelines be replaced with buried HDPE pipe to protect from future wildfires at an estimated cost of about \$50M. A subsequent peer review of the Freyer & Laureta engineering report completed by Haro Kasunich & Associates in November 2022 concluded that Freyer & Laureta had underestimated the environmental impact and difficulty of constructing a 12'-wide bench to accommodate burial of the pipeline given the steep slopes and difficult access. The District is currently acquiring additional cost information on various options. FEMA will reimburse 90% of eligible costs associated with constructing the pipelines above ground as they were prior to the CZU wildfire, but it is not yet known what proportion of an additional cost to bury the pipelines would be covered.

The District will have many other fire recovery expenses in addition to the cross-country pipelines. Given the escalation in the estimated costs of recovery since the implementation of the surcharge, even with the increase in FEMA reimbursement to 90%, it is clear that the \$5M surcharge will not cover the District's non-reimbursed fire recovery expenses. Although difficult to estimate due to escalating costs of construction and uncertainties about FEMA reimbursement, the current estimate for total cost of recovery from the CZU Fire is about \$75M. Because not all expenses are reimbursable by FEMA and some projects will be reimbursed for less than the nominal 90%, it is estimated that on average about 75% of the costs will be reimbursed. This leaves \$15M, after the \$5M from the CZU Fire surcharge, that the District will need to fund in recovery-related capital expenditures over the next few years.

The District is in the process of consolidating with two small water systems that were destroyed in the CZU Fire. Bracken Brae and Forest Springs are located along Big Basin Way, outside the District's current service areas but within the District's legal boundaries. The majority of the funding for infrastructure to add the approximately 150 connections to the SLVWD will be provided by grants from the California Department of Water Resources.

- Repair of damage from Winter 2022-23 storms

Central and northern California experienced the wettest 3-week period in the last 161 years during a series of "atmospheric river" events December 27, 2022, through January 16, 2023. Surface water intakes on creeks were damaged by high, debris-laden flows. Saturated ground combined with high winds led to many landslides and fallen trees that damaged District access roads and caused earth



movements that broke water mains. Current cost estimates for damage exceed \$4M. California has secured a Presidential Major Disaster Declaration, which will make FEMA funds available for assistance in making repairs. It is anticipated that 75% of eligible expenses will be reimbursed by FEMA.

The addition of storm-related repairs to recovery from the CZU Fire will create cash-flow concerns that need to be considered, given that reimbursement by FEMA for allowed expenses is a complicated, slow process. This disaster-related work is further stretching the capacity of our relatively small staff to undertake and coordinate repairs, and may require an examination of staffing levels.

- Ongoing Investments in Infrastructure

The District has a backlog of capital improvement projects as a consequence of decades of underinvestment in infrastructure. In 2019 the District contracted with Akel Engineering to create a Water Master Plan (WMP) and Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). This work was completed in 2021. The CIP included recommendations for rehabilitation and/or upgrade of the majority of the District's infrastructure, as well as a preliminary prioritization of projects. The District is currently implementing portions of the CIP. Given the level of construction activity on capital projects anticipated annually, the District is considering creation of a construction crew of 4-5 individuals dedicated to pipeline installation as a way to speed implementation of capital projects and capitalize employee costs.

- Membership in the Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency

The District is one of three founding members of the Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency (SMGWA); the other two are Scotts Valley Water District and the County of Santa Cruz. SMGWA was formed in response to California's 2014 Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, and is charged with managing groundwater resources in the over-drafted Santa Margarita groundwater basin within the San Lorenzo Valley watershed. SMGWA submitted its mandated Groundwater Sustainability Plan in January 2022. The District is committed to annual expenditures for administrative and monitoring tasks, and will pursue capital projects described in the Plan as grant funding becomes available.