

DRAFT**RESOLUTION 20xx-xxx****RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AN AGREEMENT
WITH MARINE TAXONOMIC SERVICES LTD FOR
AS-NEEDED CAULERPA MONITORING AND
MANAGEMENT SERVICES IN AN AMOUNT NOT
TO EXCEED \$2,000,000**

WHEREAS, the San Diego Unified Port District (District) is a public corporation created by the Legislature in 1962 pursuant to Harbors and Navigation Code Appendix 1, (Port Act); and

WHEREAS, the Board of Port Commissioners (BPC) adopted BPC Policy No. 110 to establish a policy governing the processing and administration of public projects, consulting and service agreements, the purchasing of supplies, materials, and equipment, and grants; and

WHEREAS, on September 21, 2023, an in-water pre-construction eelgrass/*Caulerpa* dive survey was conducted as an Army Corps of Engineers and Regional Water Quality Control Board permit condition for the Antigua Village Dock Replacement project in the Coronado Cays; and

WHEREAS, during this survey, divers identified an approximately 24 square meter patch of *Caulerpa prolifera* growing underneath and adjacent to the boat docks; and

WHEREAS, additional diver surveys in October 2023 found 0.25 acres of *Caulerpa prolifera* along the northern side of Antigua Village and in April 2024 diver surveys found a 15 square meter patch of *Caulerpa prolifera* in the South San Diego Bay National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge); and

WHEREAS, in Spring 2024, divers completed the placement of benthic barriers over the known infestation areas in Antigua Village, Coronado Cays and the Refuge; and

WHEREAS, in April 2025, a small patch of *Caulerpa prolifera* was found adjacent to the existing *Caulerpa prolifera* patches; and

WHEREAS, in August 2025, three new patches of *Caulerpa* measuring a total of 8 square meters were found in the Refuge, adjacent to the existing patches; and

WHEREAS, all patches of *Caulerpa* have been covered with salt, netting, and benthic barriers to prevent the spread of the alga and to assist with eradication efforts; and

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WHEREAS, any spread of *Caulerpa prolifera* into the South Bay eelgrass beds, if left untreated, has the potential to impact the Bay's 70 fish species and 60-80 threatened green sea turtles which reside in or forage on eelgrass; and

WHEREAS, while all known patches of *Caulerpa prolifera* are covered with benthic barriers, divers continue to conduct *Caulerpa* surveys in South Bay; and

WHEREAS, additionally, the known patches of *Caulerpa prolifera* will be surveyed again this fall; and

WHEREAS, in order to declare that *Caulerpa* has been eradicated from the Bay, two years of monitoring with no new *Caulerpa* findings is required; and

WHEREAS, on August 21, 2025, pursuant to BPC Policy No. 110, the District issued a Request for Qualifications (RFQ #25-16MB) for As-Needed *Caulerpa* Monitoring and Management Services; and

WHEREAS, the RFQ notification was sent to 383 vendors via PlanetBids and the District received one responsive proposal; and

WHEREAS, staff reviewed the lone proposal and evaluated using criteria established in the RFQ and based on review of the proposals, staff recommends authorizing agreement with the lone firm, Marine Taxonomic Services Ltd.; and

WHEREAS, Marine Taxonomic Services Ltd. and their subcontractor Merkel & Associates are the only firms in Southern California with *Caulerpa* Surveyor qualifications and large enough certified dive teams to perform all the survey and treatment work required for the San Diego Bay *Caulerpa* infestation; and

WHEREAS, these two firms successfully eradicated *Caulerpa* from two other Southern California waterways and have performed the majority of survey and treatment work on the San Diego Bay infestation; and

WHEREAS, \$600,000 was allocated in the Fiscal Year 26 budget for *Caulerpa* monitoring and management, and it is anticipated that annual survey costs will decrease if the infestation is managed effectively; and

WHEREAS, the \$2,000,000 capacity of the proposed five-year agreement is divided into survey, treatment, and reporting tasks; and

WHEREAS, all priority survey areas and timelines shall be determined in coordination with the District and the Southern California *Caulerpa* Action Team; and

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WHEREAS, due to the presence and threat presented by *Caulerpa prolifera* and to receive funding from federal and state grants to support the eradication of *Caulerpa prolifera* in the Coronado Cays and South San Diego Bay, District staff recommends authorizing an agreement with Marine Taxonomic Services, Ltd. for As-Needed *Caulerpa* Monitoring and Management Services in an Amount Not to Exceed \$2,000,000.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Port Commissioners of the San Diego Unified Port District, as follows:

That the Executive Director or his designated representative is hereby authorized to enter into an agreement with Marine Taxonomic Services Ltd. for As-Needed *Caulerpa* Monitoring and Management Services in an Amount Not to Exceed \$2,000,000.

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY:
GENERAL COUNSEL

By: Assistant/Deputy

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Port Commissioners of the San Diego Unified Port District, this 9th day of December 2025, by the following vote: