

ITEM #:	18
DATE:	07-28-26
DEPT:	PW

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: FY 2026/27 WATER MONITORING SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH PRAIRIE RIVERS OF IOWA

BACKGROUND:

In 2020, the City of Ames partnered with Story County and numerous local agencies to develop the Story County Water Monitoring and Interpretation Plan (2021–2030), a coordinated county-wide effort to monitor and improve the quality of streams, rivers, and lakes throughout Story County. Prairie Rivers of Iowa (PRI) has assisted with implementation of the monitoring plan since its inception by providing water quality monitoring, technical expertise, data interpretation, and public education.

The purpose of the monitoring program is to collect and analyze water quality data, increase public awareness of local water quality issues, identify watershed concerns, evaluate long-term trends, and support projects and practices that improve water quality throughout Story County. **The program also supports the City's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit requirements by providing monitoring, education, and watershed planning activities.**

The City enters into a one-year professional services agreement with Prairie Rivers of Iowa each fiscal year to continue implementation of the monitoring plan. The proposed agreement covers the period of July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027 and includes the following services:

- Monthly water quality monitoring and laboratory coordination at fifteen monitoring sites throughout Story County.
- Coordination of two volunteer water quality monitoring events annually.
- Water quality data analysis, interpretation, and reporting.
- Maintenance and support of the public water quality monitoring website.
- Support for Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) development and implementation.
- Investigation of bacterial sources within local waterways as funding permits.
- Public education and outreach related to water quality and conservation.
- Technical assistance with conservation planning, habitat restoration, and grant opportunities supporting City water quality initiatives.

The proposed agreement for FY 2026/27 totals **\$59,000**, an increase of **\$2,260 (approximately 4.0%)** over the FY 2025/26 agreement. The increase reflects annual program costs and continued implementation of the monitoring plan.

Funding for this agreement is programmed within the Public Works operating and Water Pollution Control watershed-based nutrient reduction CIP budgets.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve the FY 2026/27 Water Monitoring Services Agreement with Prairie Rivers of Iowa of Ames, Iowa, in an amount not to exceed **\$59,000**.
2. Direct staff to further negotiate the scope of services with Prairie Rivers of Iowa.
3. Do not approve the agreement.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The proposed agreement continues implementation of the Story County Water Monitoring and Interpretation Plan and provides the City with ongoing water quality monitoring, technical expertise, public education, and watershed planning support. **These services assist the City in meeting stormwater permit requirements, identifying water quality concerns, evaluating long-term trends, and supporting future watershed improvement projects.** Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1, as described above.

ATTACHMENT(S):

[2026-27 Ames Water Monitoring Contract-1.docx](#)