


INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 15, 2022

TO: Commissioner Anson Moran
President, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission

FROM: Dennis J. Herrera 
General Manager

SUBJECT: Increase to Declaration of Emergency – Stern Grove
Restoration Project

I write to advise that remediation of the emergency condition at Stern Grove will require additional funding. The initial rough estimate for the remediation was \$4 million but complications due to the unusual site conditions necessitate a revised estimate of \$20 million.

The Incident. On August 23, 2021, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission crews were working on a leaking air valve on a 54-inch diameter water transmission pipeline, the San Andreas Pipeline No. 2, at 22nd Avenue and Sloat Boulevard. While they were tightening down a bolt, the air valve failed, sending water into the air and flooding adjacent areas, particularly Stern Grove. The steep slope on the south side of Stern Grove was heavily eroded and gullied by the flow undermining up to 63 tall eucalyptus trees that exist on the slope and making the slope unstable. The water and debris from the slope flowed down into and around the Concert Meadow covering the meadow, surrounding three backstage buildings, and filling in the creeks and culverts that usually transport stormwater runoff away from the site.

Declaration of Emergency. On August 26, 2021, then-Acting General Manager Michael Carlin declared an emergency under San Francisco Administrative Code Section 6.60 and requested the concurrence of then-Commission President Maxell to provide contract resources for tree removal, slope repair and debris removal. At the time of the emergency, before the impact of the incident could be fully evaluated, the contract amount was estimated not to exceed \$4 million.

Emergency Remediation Work. The location of the site is unique because of the steep slope above the historic amphitheater and facilities. SFPUC Staff, with support from consultants and contractors, performed initial site investigations to assess the damage of the impacted slope, concert meadow, and ancillary buildings and facilities surrounding the concert meadow and performed detailed design for site restoration. The initial cost estimate, made within 48 hours of the emergency before the impact of

London N. Breed
Mayor

Anson Moran
President

Newsha Ajami
Vice President

Sophie Maxwell
Commissioner

Tim Paulson
Commissioner

Dennis J. Herrera
General Manager

OUR MISSION: To provide our customers with high-quality, efficient and reliable water, power and sewer services in a manner that values environmental and community interests and sustains the resources entrusted to our care.



the incident could be fully understood, was \$4 million. SFPUC retained Anvil Builders Inc. to perform the remediation work. Below is a chart of the work and expenditures to date.

As the remediation work has progressed and uncovered more damage than was initially visible in the wake of the incident, Staff has determined that remediation of the emergency will require: rebuilding the slope using engineered soils; rebuilding drainage systems and structural retaining walls to stabilize the hillside and to mitigate against future erosion and failure; protecting in-place the existing large diameter sewer within the footprint of the impacted slope; removal and reinstallation of historical rock walls; restoration of concert and west meadow turfgrass; replacement of exterior and interior furnishings at the ancillary buildings following moisture and mold abatements as a result of significant water egress into the buildings; removal of 63 large eucalyptus trees and replanting of eucalyptus trees within the impacted slope; and restoration of the Vale Street parking lot and tennis courts.

With this additional scope, the cost of the work is now estimated not to exceed \$20 million.

Below is a breakdown of the project expenditures to date and estimated costs for the remaining restoration for this historical site.

Exhibit 1: Estimated Project Expenditures (as of 1/31/22)	
Item	Amount
INITIAL SITE CLEANUP	\$1,367,000
TREE REMOVAL	\$1,133,000
BUILDING FLOOD CLEANUP AND INVESTIGATION	\$250,000
SALVAGING HISTORIAL ROCK WALL	\$219,000
TOTAL	\$2,969,000

Exhibit 2: Estimated Remaining Costs	
Item	Amount
MEADOW RESTORATION	\$350,000
BUILDING RESTORATION	\$3,237,000
SLOPE RESTORATION	\$5,183,000
DRAINAGE SYSTEM AND RETAINING WALLS	\$2,141,000
SHORING SYSTEM TO PROTECT EXISTING SEWER	\$3,500,000
LANDSCAPING AND TREE PLANTING	\$673,000
SITE RESTORATION AND FINAL CLEANUP	\$1,947,000
TOTAL	\$17,031,000
OVERALL ESTIMATED PROJECT COSTS	\$20,000,000

Given the circumstances of the incident and the emergency remediation necessary to restore the Stern Grove site, I am requesting your concurrence to update the August 23, 2021 declaration of an emergency to increase the estimated not-to-exceed cost from \$4 million to \$20 million.

CONCUR AND APPROVE: 

Anson Moran, President
San Francisco Public Utilities Commission

cc: S. Maxwell
T. Paulson
N. Ajami
M. Carlin
A. Johanson
S. Ritchie