

PUBLIC INTEREST FINDING

(REQUEST APPROVAL TO USE TRADE NAME IN SPECIAL PROVISIONS)

SAN DIEGO/IMPERIAL COUNTY

PURSUANT TO:

FHWA Contract Administration Core Curriculum Participant's Manual and Reference Guide 2001, Chapter II C, section 3, Public Interest/Cost Effectiveness Findings. Related References: 23 U.S.C. 112. & 23 CFR 635.106(a), 635.204, 635.205, 635.407(a), 635.411(c)

APPLICABILITY:

Federal-aid Highway Construction Projects

LOCATION:

San Diego and Imperial County

HISTORY:

As part of the roadside program, the California Department of Transportation will provide projects that will include new highway plant and irrigation restoration. Our concern is including proprietary items on these projects and specifying the use of computer controlled irrigation systems.

A computer-controlled system consists of a base station; field units and auxiliary items solely designed to operate on their own and are not compatible with other manufacturers' units. The computerized systems provide maintenance with a central control station able to program, schedule, monitor water use, prepare reports, and detect, react to and alert personnel of system failures. This saves resources and minimizes the number of times maintenance personnel need to be in the field expose to traffic to manually operate the irrigation system and check for breakage. There is considerable water savings utilizing these types of systems.

To conform to a district and statewide water conservation effort, it is proposed to connect proposed irrigation controllers to a new Regional Irrigation Control System (RICS). Central irrigation management will enable maintenance forces to adjust each irrigation controller and corresponding satellite controllers according to evapotranspiration rate (ET). Coming as close as possible to applying the exact amount of water required by the landscape to keep it healthy and aesthetically pleasing.

By applying the correct amount of water to the planting, costly over-watering, estimated to be at 25%, can be eliminated (determined by comparing historical water consumption to projected water use, based on ET rates).

Improvements to worker safety are achieved through the use of centralized control. Programming of the controllers will be done from the maintenance office, eliminating the

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need for frequent trips to the field, and reducing worker exposure. Routine maintenance of control valves will be reduced through the use of hand-held controllers, which will allow workers to accurate control equipment from a vehicle, or other off-highway location.

The utilization and specification of a specific manufacturer's system is required due to the features desired by the District's Maintenance and Landscape Architectural Branches. These features include maintainability, reliability, and ease of operation, cost, versatility, and long-term manufacturer's support, as surveyed by the District Landscape Architecture Branch. The specification of these desired features would constitute a "sole-source" product, which only the Rain Bird Irrigation Company could supply.

PROPOSAL:

It is proposed to use the Rain Bird trade name for specifying the associated components required by the central control irrigation controllers. Rain Bird was chosen as the vendor because:

- The system proposed is a water and labor conserving device which will result in a direct public benefit:
- Rain Bird was the manufacturer chosen after researching central control irrigation controllers. The list of potential central control irrigation controllers was reduced to three manufacturers, based on our needs. Of the three manufacturers, Rain Bird had all the required features, and an excellent service record and the lowest price.
- The only other known method of obtaining a central control irrigation controller with the reliability and service history desired is to purchase the Rain Bird components a sole source State-furnished items. The process involved in preparing a purchase order and the sole source justification for State-furnished items is lengthy and would result in a much higher administrative expense to the Department.
- District 11 currently uses Rain Bird central control irrigation controllers and associated components in the field. It is desirable to match new components with the existing RICS system so that the irrigation equipment will work together as a whole.

MATERIALS LIST:

Products to be specified for which only one manufacturer of the product is known:

- **Rain Bird ESP-SAT series station controller with satellite-link in assembly**
- **Rain Bird CCU series cluster control unit in assembly**
- **Hand-Held Remote Control Transmitter; TRC transmitter kit**
- **Rain Bird Electric Remote Control Valves EFB-CP Series**
- **Rain Bird B to A Solenoid Adapter Kit SOL-ADA, with the optional manual bleed feature**

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- **24" or 36" Stainless Steel Irrigation Enclosure Cabinet Assembly with backboard**
- **Data Industrial Flow Sensors LFSM-series**

A quotation will be included in the special provisions, signed by an authorized agent, or an approved distributor, stating the name, address of the firm which will sell the components, the prices and the time span for which the price has been quoted [one year] including sales tax, the location of delivery, and a statement agreeing to sell to any contractor.

SUMMATION:

The use of a proprietary item must be justifiable because that item either provides a cost-savings and/or satisfies environmental issues beyond the standard method/item. The use of the Rain Bird trade name for specifying the associated components required by the central control irrigation system is justifiable by cost/ environmental reasons:


- The use of a centrally controlled irrigation system is environmentally beneficial: The proposed Rain Bird system is a water and labor conserving device which will result in a direct public benefit:
- Rain Bird provides a cost savings for equipment. Of the three potential central irrigation controller manufacturers, Rain Bird had all the required features, an excellent service record and the lowest price.
- Rain Bird provides a maintenance cost savings: District 11 currently uses Rain Bird central control irrigation controllers and associated components in the field. It is desirable to match new components with the existing RICS system so that the irrigation equipment will work together as a whole.

CONCLUSION:

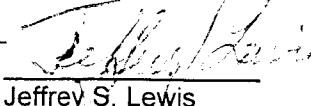
- We request that FHWA provide blanket approval permitting proprietary items using proprietary specifications for computer controlled irrigation systems on future highway plant and irrigation restoration projects. The Blanket Public Interest Finding will be updated when the product Manufacturer or material list changes. It is recommended that approval be given for the use of the trade name as proposed because it is in the best public interest.

State of California
Department of Transportation
(Caltrans)

United States Department of
Transportation Federal Highway
Administration
(FHWA)



5/19/05
Date



5/19/05
Date

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