



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: Fire
Department No.: 031
For Agenda Of: August 13, 2019
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Time:
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: 4/5

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Department Mark Hartwig, Fire Chief, 805-681-5507
Director(s)
Contact Info: Rob Heckman, Deputy Chief, 805-681-5501
SUBJECT: Grant Agreement #5GG18117 between the State of California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CALFIRE) and the Santa Barbara County Fire Department

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: Risk Management, Human Resources

As to form: Yes

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Approve the attached Resolution (Attachment A) authorizing the Fire Chief or designee to approve and execute an Agreement (Attachment B) with the State of California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection for the acceptance of \$2,229,818.00 of grant funds to implement a fuel reduction project in the area designated by the Agreement from the grant approval date through March 15, 2022;
- b) Approve Budget Revision Request #BJE-0006550 (Attachment C);
- c) Adopt the Salary Resolution (Attachment D) effective August 12, 2019 adding three (1.0 FTE) Fire Control Worker, Senior positions; and
- d) Determine this action is exempt from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15378(b)(4), finding that the action is a creation of government funding mechanisms or other government fiscal activities which do not involve any commitment to any specific project which may result in a potentially significant impact on the environment.

Summary Text:

The Agreement allows the Santa Barbara County Fire Department to use \$2,229,818.00 in State grant money to execute the “Lompoc Valley Fuel Reduction Project”.

The project, which involves a variety of treatments, proposes 2,518 acres of combined treatments and the removal of 200 dead trees, to reduce the impacts of wildfires to this area by mitigating fuel continuity, providing improved safe separation distance for firefighters and providing opportunities for access to keep fires smaller, thereby reducing the release of carbon into the environment.

This project is consistent with both the California Strategic Fire Plan, Santa Barbara County Unit Strategic Fire Plan and supported by the Santa Barbara County FireSafe Council. The project supports the goals and objectives of the Santa Barbara County Vegetation Management Program.

Background:

In December of 2018, the Santa Barbara County Fire Department submitted a California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire) California Climate Investment (CCI) Fire Prevention Program Grant Application requesting grant funding to support the “Lompoc Valley Fuel Reduction Project”, a defensible space fuel reduction project in the Lompoc Valley.

This multi-year project benefits at least 49,600 acres in an area of Santa Barbara County with a history of large wildland fires. The planned treatments include community defensible space around Vandenberg Village and Mission Hills; 15.1 miles of roadside fuel reduction along Harris Grade, Rucker and Burton Mesa Roads; 678 acres of fuel reduction, including over 150 dead trees, within the La Purisma Mission; and an 18 mile 150'-300' wide shaded fuel reduction zone spanning from Vandenberg Air Force Base to the outskirts of Buellton. This fuel treatment will create strategic locations to provide firefighter access, safety zones, and staging areas.

The planned fuel and roadside treatments are intended to protect communities, reduce the number of ignitions, and limit the size and intensity of fire occurrences in older age class fuel beds in the Lompoc Valley region. The project directly limits overall greenhouse gas emissions by reducing the size and intensity of future wildland fires.

The Santa Barbara County Fire Department has been selected to receive the state grant in an amount not to exceed \$2,229,818.00.

Project Implementation Plan:

The Santa Barbara County Fire Department (SBC) will manage this project and use its Fire Crew, Construction Section, GIS Section, dedicated SBC Fuels Crew, local contractors, and possibly outside agency crews (California Conservation Corp, Cal Fire, Ventura County Fire) in order to complete the 2,500 acres of fuel reduction and 18 mile fuel break project over an approximate 30 month period. Work will begin on the Burton Mesa Preserve where fuel reduction activities fall under the Burton Mesa Land Management Plan and some existing CEQA Notice of Exemptions (NOE's), while a contractor develops a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the remaining project treatments requiring environmental review.

Over the grant period, hand crews will average 120 days a year on this project, beginning with the treatments providing the 100 foot community defensible space as outlined in the Burton Mesa Land Management Plan. The next phase of the project will be the right-of-way fuel reduction along Burton Mesa, Rucker and Harris Grade Roads. These projects will fall under an NOE as maintenance of existing facilities and include thinning of Burton Mesa chaparral, pines and dead trees that abut each road. The County Fire Construction/Dozer Section or contractors will spend 50 days a year utilizing dozers and masticators (two operators a day plus a swamper/assistant operator) to complete the project, including an 18 mile 150-300 foot wide fuel reduction zone spanning ridge tops from Vandenberg Air Force Base to the outskirts of Buellton.

CEQA Compliance:

All project activities occurring on the Burton Mesa Preserve will follow and comply with the existing Burton Mesa Land Management Plan and associated Environmental Impact Report (EIR) completed by the California Department of Fish & Wildlife. The Grant will provide funding for initial study and environmental review in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for project activities outside the scope of the Burton Mesa Land Management Plan EIR.

A requirement of the grant is compliance with CEQA and all other local, State, and federal environmental laws. A copy of the certified CEQA document must be provided to State before any grant funds are made available for any Project activity that could directly impact the environment (e.g. cutting, piling or burning bush, masticating, dozer work, etc.). CEQA compliance is required to be completed within one (1) year from start date of the Agreement.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

The County Fire Department will fund a 10% share of grant eligible direct costs and will also provide start-up equipment, vehicles and facilities. Start-up equipment consists of chainsaws, weed whips, blowers, hand tools etc. To minimize costs, the Fire Department plans to replace but retain one or more fully depreciated Assigned status department utility pick-ups. The replaced pick-ups will be converted to Operating cost vehicles at a minimal cost and will be assigned to the Fuels Crew. Similarly, the Department is searching for a used van and may need to lease a van if an appropriate one is not located for purchase. A single wide trailer will be leased and located at the old Fire Station 51 site on Burton Mesa Boulevard in Lompoc for the period of the grant. There is a possibility that additional fire prevention funding will be forthcoming from the State and that this funding may be used to offset the start-up equipment costs. However, at this time, the additional funding has not been formalized so Fire District fund balance will be identified as the funding source for the FY 19/20 SBC costs.

For FY 19/20, a total budget for this project of \$1,094,800 is identified with Salaries and Benefits estimated at \$746,100 and Services, Supplies and Equipment estimated at \$348,700. State funding (including a 12% administrative rate applied to non-capital equipment direct costs) is anticipated to cover \$904,600 of the total budget amount, leaving a total of \$190,200 as the County Fire Department share that will be funded with Fire District fund balance.

Future year grant budgets (for FY 20/21 and FY 21/22) are expected to reflect a County Fire share that more closely aligns with the 10% grant match since start-up costs will not be necessary in the out-years.

Fiscal Analysis:

<u>Funding Sources</u>	<u>Current FY Cost:</u>	<u>Annualized On-going Cost:</u>	<u>Total One-Time Project Cost</u>
General Fund			
State	\$ 904,600.00		\$ 2,229,818.00
Federal			
Fees			
Other: Fire District	\$ 190,200.00	\$ 114,000.00	\$ 308,500.00
Total	\$ 1,094,800.00	\$ 114,000.00	\$ 2,538,318.00

Narrative:

Total state funding for this multi-year grant is \$2,229,818 with total estimated Fire Department/District project funding at \$308,500 which includes the 10% share plus start-up and support costs. The \$114,000 annualized on-going cost reflects the two Regular Senior Fire Control Workers associated with the Fire Crew for fire specific activities.

Staffing Impacts:

Legal Positions:

Add 3 new

FTEs:

Add 3.0

In order to meet the terms of the grant agreement, the County Fire Department will create a dedicated eleven member Fuels Reduction Team which will be comprised of an Extra Help Project Manager, an Extra Help Crew Supervisor, a Regular Senior Fire Control Worker, and eight Extra Help Fuels Crew members. This Fuels Crew includes the addition of a Regular Senior Fire Control Worker that will ensure a level of fire fuels expertise and consistency necessary to complete the projects. The grant is funding the one Regular full-time Senior Fire Control Worker in addition to the ten Extra Help positions for the Fuels Reduction Team.

In addition, the existing SBC seasonal Extra Help Fire Crew will be expanded to a year-round crew, resulting in two year-round Extra Help Fire Crews that will be increased to 20 personnel to enable the crews to support the grant activities in addition to fire activities. The Fire Crew expansions also include the addition of two Regular Senior Fire Control Workers to ensure an appropriate level of expertise and span of control is in place for the crews to operate safely.

Special Instructions:

Upon Board approval and execution, the Clerk is asked to please return a copy of the minute order and duplicate original Grant Resolution to the Fire Department, attention: Garrett Huff.

Please also return a copy of the minute order and fully-executed Salary Resolution to Stefan Brewer, Human Resources Department.

Attachments:

- A. Grant Resolution
- B. Lompoc Valley Fuel Reduction Project Grant Agreement #5GG18117
- C. Budget Revision #BJE-0006550
- D. Salary Resolution

Authored by:

Rob Heckman, Deputy Chief

cc:

Shawna Jorgensen, Chief Financial Officer

Rob Hazard, Division Chief