



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: April 1, 2025
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Time:
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Department Mark Hartwig, Fire Chief / Fire Warden, 805-681-5500
Director(s)
Contact Info: Fred Tan, Fire Marshal, 805-681-5500
SUBJECT: Agreement with the City of Goleta to contract with the Santa Barbara County Fire Department to remove hazardous fuels in the Ellwood Mesa

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: Risk Management

As to form: Yes

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Approve and authorize the Fire Chief or his designee to execute an Agreement (Attachment A) between the City of Goleta and the Santa Barbara County Fire Department to utilize Fire Department resources to remove hazardous fuels in the Ellwood Mesa at a total amount not to exceed \$1,006,332 with a period of performance from April 1st, 2025 to June 30, 2027; and
- b) Approve and authorize the Fire Chief, or designee, to make immaterial amendments in accordance with Agreement Section 5; and
- c) Determine this action is not 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 involves the commitment to a specific project which may result in impact on the environment. A copy of the CEQA document is approved and has been provided to the State prior to any funds are made available for any Project activity that could directly impact the environment.

Summary Text:

The Fire Department requests the Board of Supervisors (Board) approve an Agreement between the Santa Barbara County Fire Department (SBCFD) and the City of Goleta (City) to utilize SBCFD's Fire Crews, Fuels Crew and Construction Section to reduce and remove hazardous fuels in the Ellwood Mesa area.

The Agreement between the City and SBCFD is for a total amount not to exceed \$1,006,332.00.

The City shall reimburse SBCFD utilizing CAL FIRE grant funds for labor, overhead, equipment and materials furnished by SBCFD. SBCFD agrees to bill the City on an actual cost basis on a quarterly schedule.

As the Fire Department serving the City of Goleta through the inclusion of the City in the Santa Barbara County Fire Protection District, SBCFD already has a mechanism in place with the City for emergency and fire protection services. The recommended action to approve this Agreement formalizes the SBCFD hand and mechanical treatments over the 78 acres in the Ellwood Mesa outlined the City's Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) (Attachment B) and approved Monarch Butterfly Habitat Management Plan (MBHMP) (Attachment C).

Background:

In 2022, the City received a California Climate Investments (CCI)/CAL FIRE Wildfire Prevention Grant to reduce the risk of wildfire in the neighborhoods adjacent to Ellwood Mesa. The Ellwood Mesa Neighborhoods Hazard Fuel Reduction Project allocates funding for consultants to assist with CEQA and Coastal permitting, on the ground ecological consultants during project implementation, and funding for private and government (SBCFD) contractors.

Coastal permitting and CEQA documentation were the early activities of the grant project with these efforts culminating in 2024 with treatments initiated by private contractors, accompanied by ecological consultants, in northeast portion of the Ellwood Mesa Butterfly Habitat.

In 2023, the City and SBCFD began conversations to enlist resources from SBCFD. Since this project is funded through a CCI/ CAL FIRE grant, only resources not funded by CAL FIRE on a full-time basis and the State can be invoiced for reimbursement. The SBCFD Fuels Crew is limited term and funded solely by grants, additionally, two of the four SBCFD Fire Crews are funded by the Santa Barbara County Fire District. The SBCFD Fuels Crew and the two district funded Fire Crews are therefore eligible for reimbursement on this project.

This project designed by the City creates a defensible space buffer on public lands around residences to protect over 3,500 homes from an uncontrolled wildfire and protect sensitive wildlife species from wildfire. The SBCFD Crews and Construction Section, aided daily by contracted ecological consultants, will also address the excessive buildup of dead eucalyptus trees killed by the on-going drought while ensuring monarch butterflies and other wildlife are not harmed.

Project Implementation Plan:

After the Board authorizes the execution of the Agreement with the City, the SBCFD Fuels and Fire Crews, and the Construction Section will begin working on reducing fuels in the Ellwood Mesa. The City and SBCFD anticipate the project will be completed by the spring of 2026, but includes language in the Agreement to take the project into 2027 if necessary.

The SBCFD Fuels and Fire Crews, and the Construction Section have work identified within the SBCFD's Unit Fire Plan. These resources will balance time between the projects outlined in the Unit Fire Plan and SBCFD grant funded projects in order to meet the goals of the overall Santa Barbara County community.

The projected timeframe for the completion of this project is 12 to 14 months, well within the City's grant performance period (ends March 16, 2026).

Performance Measure:

The performance measure for this Agreement is the creation of the community defensible space treatments outlined in the City's grant project and/or the utilization of the all the \$1,006,332.00 allocated for government contractors.

CEQA Compliance:

This CEQA documentation was completed and the Notice of Determination (Attachment D) dated October 20, 2023 was filed with the State Clearinghouse. A Coastal Commission permit (Attachment E) was obtained in spring of 2023. Approval of this Agreement is not exempt from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15378(b)(4). Approval of this action is a creation of government funding mechanisms or other government fiscal activities which involves the commitment to a specific project which may result in a potentially significant impact on the environment.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

There are no facility impacts. SBCFD will invoice the City quarterly and include an administrative charge.

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			\$ 1,006,332.00
Federal			
Fees			
Other: Fire District			
Total	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,006,332.00

Narrative: Funding for this Agreement is from the City's grant through the CCI/CAL FIRE Wildfire Prevention Grant program. The Agreement with the City will fund 100% of the Fire Department's grant eligible costs on an actual cost basis from April 1, 2025 up to June 30, 2027. No additional appropriations are needed at this time as the Fire Department anticipates that existing appropriations in the FY 2024-25 Adopted Budget and the FY 2025-26 Requested Budget will be sufficient to cover the expenditures associated with this agreement.

Staffing Impacts:

There are no staffing impacts for the implementation and management of this project in the Ellwood Mesa. Existing Fuels and Fire Crews, as well as, the Construction Section will be assigned to this project with no additional County staff required to implement and/or manage the project.

Special Instructions:

Upon Board approval and execution, the Clerk is asked to please return a copy of the Agreement and minute order to the Fire Department, attention: Frederick Tan.

Attachments:

- A. Agreement between the Santa Barbara County Fire Department and the City of Goleta
- B. City of Goleta's Ellwood Mesa Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program
- C. Monarch Butterfly Habitat Management Plan
- D. Notice of Determination
- E. Coastal Commission Staff Report

Authored by:

Fred Tan, Fire Marshal

CC:

Mark A. Hartwig, Fire Chief
Jennie Brunick, Chief Financial and Administrative Officer
Diane Sauer, Fiscal Manager