



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: CEO/Flood  
Control/Public Works  
Department No.: 054  
For Agenda Of: 10/06/09  
Placement: Admin  
Estimated Tme: NA  
Continued Item: No  
If Yes, date from:  
Vote Required: 4/5 vote

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**TO:** Board of Supervisors  
Board of Directors, Flood Control and Water Conservation District

**FROM:** Department Scott McGolpin, Public Works Director, 568-3010  
Director(s) Michael Harris, Emergency Operations Chief, County Executive  
Office  
Contact Info: Thomas D. Fayram, Deputy Public Works Director, 568-3436

**SUBJECT:** **Emergency Watershed Response Plan in Response to the La Brea Fire**

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**County Counsel Concurrence**

As to form: N/A

**Other Concurrence:** N/A

As to form: No

**Recommended Actions:**

That the Board of Supervisors and the Board of Directors:

- a) Approve the County's La Brea Fire Emergency Watershed Response Plan;
- b) Authorize the Public Works Director or his designee to apply for and to execute any and all agreements, subsequent amendments, and documents with State and Federal agencies to receive funding from various programs for watershed protection work in response to the La Brea Fire;
- c) Authorize the Public Works Director to advertise and receive bids for the pilot channel projects and approve plans and specifications for the projects; and
- d) Approve the attached Budget Revision Request (BJE No.2008043) to release designations in the amount of \$150,000 to the Santa Maria River Levee flood zone to pay for costs associated with response work relating to the La Brea Fire. (4/5 vote required)

**Auditor-Controller Concurrence**

As to form: N/A

### **Summary Text:**

The La Brea Fire started on August 8, 2009 and burned almost 90,000 acres of watershed mostly in the Sisquoc watershed in the Los Padres National Forest. A small portion of the fire perimeter is tributary to the Cuyama River which flows into Twitchell Reservoir. As experienced with previous fires, a burned watershed exhibits a drastically enhanced response the following winter including a dramatic increase in runoff volumes and correspondingly dramatic increases in debris production.

In the case of the La Brea Fire, a very serious condition exists downstream. The Santa Maria River Levee is located downstream of the fire and has been an issue for the past several years. Construction on the repair of critical sections of the levee has not yet begun, it is expected that full completion of the levee work is still up to two years off.

Under the current conditions, staff considers there to be a much increased threat to high river flows this winter. To address these conditions, the watershed response plan consists of three basic elements:

1. Advanced Measures (work to be completed before winter)
2. Interagency Coordination, and
3. Winter Monitoring and Operations.

### **Advanced Measures**

The advanced measures work is very similar to the work done after the Zaca Fire in 2007. This work may include but not limited to:

Pilot Channel Work: 1) to re-establish and bolster the pilot channel from Suey Road to US 101, 2) maintain the pilot channel in Guadalupe, and 3) propose new pilot channel work in other areas of the River.

Emergency Rock Stockpiles: Two rock stockpile sites currently exist along the levee; a third was in place until recently. This stockpile was removed to make room for the Corps of Engineer's contractor for the levee repair project. Re-establishing this rock stockpile site will be evaluated when the Corps selects their contractor. Other options may be available.

Equipment Staging: In previous winters, equipment has been staged at the levee to expedite deployment to the levee if needed. Equipment was located on the closed City Landfill near Suey Crossing. This staging area will be utilized again this winter.

### **Interagency Coordination**

The interagency coordination will take place with a variety of agencies all in which have interests in the Santa Maria River and its vicinity. Coordination and cooperation will be key. The plan will include each agency and their role as well as a master contact list with 24-hour contact information.

### **Winter Monitoring and Operations**

The final aspect of this plan is the monitoring and operational phase during the winter. During the winter, each storm event will be handled through: 1) pre-storm weather forecasting; 2) during storm monitoring; and 3) event driven emergency actions and post storm follow up.

**Background:**

The La Brea Fire falls on the heels of the Zaca Fire in late 2007. The Zaca Fire burned approximately 78,000 acres of the Sisquoc River Watershed.

While the Zaca Fire area has experienced re-growth over the past two winters, the fire area still exists as a potential to yield increased runoff from the watershed. The La Brea Fire will yield significantly more runoff this winter and combined with the still present Zaca Fire impacts are cause for concern in the Santa Maria River this winter.

While the Corps of Engineers is starting on construction of repairs to the levee this year, that work will take two years to complete. Until that time, the upper areas of the Santa Maria River Levee are still at great risk.

**Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:**

Budgeted: No

**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			
Federal			
Fees			
Levee Flood Zone	\$ 150,000.00		
Total	\$ 150,000.00	\$ -	\$ -

**Narrative:**

Attached is a budget revision to release designations to pay for work needed to respond to the La Brea Fire. At this time, total cost of response work is unknown and specific projects have not been finalized. Constructing pilot channels is one element of the plan but it is unknown at this time if the work will be done by County forces or if hiring a contractor will be necessary.

**Special Instructions:**

Direct the Clerk of the Board to send a copy of the minute order of these actions and a copy of the Budget Revision Request to the Flood Control District office, attn: Christina Lopez.

**Attachments:**

La Brea Fire Emergency Watershed Response Plan  
Budget Revision Request (BJE #2008043)

**Authored by:** Tom Fayram, Deputy Public Works Director, 568-3436

**cc:**