



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

Submitted on:  
(COB Stamp)

**Department Name:** Fire  
**Department No.:** 031  
**Agenda Date:** April 7, 2026  
**Placement:** Departmental Agenda  
**Estimated Time:** 15 minutes  
**Continued Item:** No  
**If Yes, date from:**  
**Vote Required:** Majority

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**TO:** Board of Supervisors  
**FROM:** Department Director: Garrett Huff, Fire Chief/Fire Warden  
Contact: Fred Tan, Fire Marshal

**SUBJECT: California Fire Safe Council Wildfire County Coordinator Grant Program:  
County Coordinator Program Update**

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**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) Receive and file the program update (Update) from the Santa Barbara County Fire Safe Council; and
- b) Determine this action is exempt from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15378(b)(5), finding that the action is an organizational or administrative activity of government that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment and does not involve any commitment to any specific project which may result in a potentially significant impact on the environment.

**Summary Text:**

In 2021, the California Fire Safe Council (CFSC) and CAL FIRE started an initiative called the Wildfire County Coordinator Program to enhance coordination and establish critical local capacity to plan and implement wildfire resilience strategies on the ground at the county level. Through the program, one entity per county is tasked with educating, encouraging, and developing countywide collaboration and coordination among wildfire mitigation groups.

The Board of Supervisors approved the Santa Barbara County Fire Safe Council (SBCFSC) to be County Coordinator (Coordinator) and recipient of associated funds in 2022 and has been acting in this capacity since June 2022. The SBCFSC received grant funding in the amount of \$175,000.00 in 2023, a sub-award extension of \$34,525.00 in 2024 and awarded a new round of grant funding of \$151,500.00 on January 22, 2025.

CAL FIRE and SBCFSC requires the coordinator to provide a verbal update to the Board of Supervisors to enhance understanding of Countywide wildfire coordination efforts at the highest level of governance within this County.

**Discussion:**

Considering fire does not follow jurisdictional boundaries, countywide coordination is essential to effective wildfire resilience. As the Coordinator for the County, the SBCFSC has worked to align cities, special districts, fire agencies, utilities, nonprofits, and community groups around shared priorities to reduce duplication, close gaps, and ensure resources are deployed where they have the greatest impact.

During the grant cycle, the SBCFSC has coordinated planning efforts to strengthen fuel reduction strategies, improve emergency response and evacuation systems, and promote consistent public education across communities. We continue to enhance collaboration efforts at a countywide level to leverage available funding from all stakeholders and partners, share data and best practices, and build a more resilient landscape and population than any single entity could achieve alone.

Acting as the Coordinator, and with assistance from County Fire, the SBCFSC reached out to and assembled local technical experts to form a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The TAC seeks to create a culture of collaborative, professional, effective, and consistent delivery of programs, projects, and activities contributing to and addressing gaps in wildfire resilience in Santa Barbara County.

With continued efforts with the TAC, the SBCFSC will continue to coordinate a means of communication between the various agencies, nonprofits, and institutions developing, prioritizing, collaborating, informing, and tracking wildfire preparedness, mitigation, and recovery activities in Santa Barbara County. The TAC also provides a forum for addressing wildfire preparedness and mitigation issues of countywide concern, sharing best practices, seeking comments and specific input on programs and technical issues, and informing local agencies and the public of applicable new laws and regulations.

**Background:**

In September of 2022, the California Fire Safe Council announced the County Coordinator Statewide Grant Program to assist counties with wildfire mitigation, outreach and coordination. The objective of the County Coordinator Grant is to educate, encourage, and develop countywide collaboration and coordination among various wildfire mitigation groups. Each county's designated applicant received a one-time grant of \$175,000 to cover administrative costs relevant to countywide coordination efforts, including but not limited to salary, support, and administrative costs for the designated County Coordinator.

The Board of Supervisors approved the SBCFSC to be County Coordinator and recipient of associated funds in 2022 and has been acting in this capacity since June 2022.

Coordinators (Counties or their designated applicants) work closely with the California Fire Safe Council's existing Regional Coordinators to:

- Build a consensus of all active wildfire mitigation groups, contact points, collaboration efforts, and projects.
- Analyze gaps in countywide wildfire resiliency and emergency preparedness and develop recommendation to fill these needs.
- Develop mechanisms to improve outreach and coordination efforts, such as group formation, funding plans, governance structures, and state/regional/local planning efforts.

To apply, counties were the starting point and invested in the scope and goals of the project. However, counties were able to choose to direct the application process and funds to the non-profit or public agency they felt were best equipped to execute the project. Local fire mitigation groups were not eligible to apply unless their county designated them as the primary applicant and provided a letter of support. Only one application per county was accepted. The SBCFSC was formed in 1997 as a 501(c)(3) organization with the goal of promoting wildfire safety throughout Santa Barbara County through education and action. The SBCFSC is the sole local fire safe council within Santa Barbara County.

The mission of the SBCFSC is to unify public and private organizations in Santa Barbara County to educate, motivate and coordinate to minimize losses associated with wildfires. SBCFSC is currently managing and implementing multiple wildfire mitigation projects across the county including the development of Community Wildfire Protection Plans, community chipping programs, and the Regional Wildfire Mitigation Program. As a county-wide NGO focusing on wildfire mitigation efforts, the SBCFSC was uniquely positioned to execute the scope of the 2022 County Coordinator Grant. As such, the Santa Barbara County Fire Department recommended that the SBCFSC be designated as the primary grant applicant pursuant to a Letter of Support from the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors. The 2022 County Coordinator Statewide Grant, a program of the Community Wildfire Preparedness Project, is part of California Climate Investments, a statewide program that puts billions of Cap-and-Trade dollars to work reducing GHG emissions, strengthening the economy, and improving public health and the environment – particularly in disadvantaged communities.

**Fiscal Impacts:**

There are no fiscal impacts associated with this item, as it is presented to the Board as a receive and file item.

**Attachments:**

- A. PowerPoint Presentation

**Contact Information:**

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