



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
Department No.: 012
For Agenda Of: August 2, 2011
Placement: Departmental
Estimated Tme: 40 minutes
Continued Item: Yes
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Department Chandra L. Wallar, County Executive Officer, 568-3400
Director(s)
Contact Info: Dennis Bozanich, Assistant to the CEO, 568-3400

SUBJECT: Recommended Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) Development Process

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- A. Consider and adopt the Recommended Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) Development Process; and
- B. Determine that adopting the Recommended Community Wildfire Protection Plan Development Process is not the approval of a project that is subject to environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and approve the attached proposed Notice of Exemption (NOE).

Summary Text:

On April 19, 2011, the Board directed the County Executive Office, Fire and the Planning and Development Departments to develop a County-wide process for the creation, review, approval and monitoring of CWPPs. The Board also requested that we return with a CWPP Development Process for approval.

Today, the Board will be asked to approve the Recommended CWPP Development Process for use by the public and County Staff to create CWPPs that identify and prioritize fire hazard risks and

recommend best practices to eliminate or mitigate the risks and structural ignitability. We will also be asking the Board to determine that adopting the Recommended Community Wildfire Protection Plan Development Process is not the approval of a project that is subject to environmental review under CEQA since it does not:

- Commit any signing party or anyone to carrying out, funding, or issuing a permit for any specific project;
- Require implementation of any of the recommendations in a particular CWPP; or
- Remove any permit requirement, environmental review requirement, or other legal requirement applicable to activities on either private lands or public lands.

Background:

The Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 encourages federal agencies to give consideration to the priorities established by the local community as they develop and implement forest management and hazardous fuel reduction. The local community priorities are established through the process of developing a Community Wildfire Protection Plan. CWPPs are developed as through a collaborative process that identifies and assesses fire risks and identifies and recommends best practices for eliminating or mitigating fire risks and structural ignitability.

For communities with a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP), the Healthy Forests Restoration Act provides the potential for prioritized federal funding for hazardous fuel reduction projects on non-federal land. In California, the California Fire Safe Council accepts applications for potential grants that may be used to fund: hazardous fuel reduction and maintenance projects on non-federal land; community risk assessments and Community Wildfire Protection Plans; and education and outreach opportunities for landowners and residents in at-risk communities. Public agencies and/or private parties that comply with applicable legal requirements, though, may be able to conduct hazardous fuel reduction without having a Community Wildfire Protection Plan and/or without receiving grant funding.

CWPPs may help to increase awareness of the possible ecological consequences of wildland fuel management practices, so that individual fuel reduction projects avoid or minimize harm to the environment where feasible.

Implementation of any recommended “best practice” or recommended hazardous fuel reduction within a particular CWPP might be modified, or not implemented at all, depending on a number of factors, including: environmental review; permit actions; and the availability of funding. Within any particular CWPP, County could make clear that any necessary environmental review required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and/or National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) shall be completed prior to commencement of any recommended hazardous fuel reduction.

County Staff believes that adopting the Recommended Community Wildfire Protection Plan Development Process is a practical way for the County to help ensure that CWPPs are efficiently developed as collaborative agreements in consultation with our community’s interested parties.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

None

Fiscal Analysis:

No fiscal analysis required for consideration and adoption of this response.

Attachments:

A - Community Wildfire Prevention Plan Development Toolkit

B –Proposed Notice of Exemption from CEQA

Authored by:

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CC:

Chief Michael Dyer, Fire Department
Glenn Russell, Planning and Development