



# Information and General Services Department

## **Office of Emergency Services**

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## **NEVADA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

### **Board Agenda Memo**

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**MEETING DATE:** July 9, 2019

**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** **Steve Monaghan – IGS-Emergency Services**

**SUBJECT:** Resolution proclaiming a local emergency in Nevada County due to the identification of extremely dangerous fire risk conditions in an area of Nevada County designated by the California Department of Forestry as the Ponderosa West Grass Valley Defense Zone Project Area (4/5 Affirmative Vote)

**RECOMMENDATION:** Adopt the Resolution

**FUNDING:** The Ponderosa West Grass Valley Defense Zone Project will be funded by a Cal Fire grant and a Cal Fire contract

**BACKGROUND:** California experienced the deadliest and most destructive wildfires in its history in 2017-2018. Additionally, the tree die-off in Nevada County from a multi-year drought has contributed to worsening fire conditions. On March 22, 2019, Governor Gavin Newsom issued a Proclamation of a State Emergency due to the vast tree die-off throughout the state resulting in increased risk of wildfire. Pursuant to Governor Newsom's Executive Order N-05-19, dated January 8, 2019, the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection issued a report identifying those communities in California at greatest risk of wildfire, including 35 Priority Projects for fuels reduction. The Ponderosa West Grass Valley Defense Zone Project area in Nevada County was identified as one of the Priority Projects. The Ponderosa West Grass Valley Defense Zone Project covers approximately 1,200 acres located just below Rough and Ready highway and above McCourtney Road.

The extreme wildfire risk identified within the Ponderosa West Grass Valley Defense Zone Project area has created conditions of extreme peril, necessitating immediate steps to begin fuels reduction to reduce this wildfire risk which threatens the life and safety of the people and property who reside in and around the affected area, including the densely populated communities of Lake Wildwood, Penn Valley, and Rough and Ready to the west, as well as the City of Grass Valley to the east, thereby warranting and necessitating the Proclamation of a Local Emergency.

In order to ensure that equipment and services necessary to achieve the directives pertaining to the priority fuel reduction projects, Governor Gavin Newsom's Proclamation of a State Emergency suspended, as necessary, the provisions of the Government Code and Public Contract Code applicable to state contracts, including but not limited to, advertising and competitive bidding requirements.

Due to delays resulting from a competitive solicitation for bids, the need to respond to this emergency cannot be timely completed during the height of fire season if the County or its subcontractors are required to competitively solicit for bids and comply with other local requirements within the County's purchasing codes for fuel reduction services within the Ponderosa West Grass Valley Defense Zone Project area. Accordingly, it is requested that competitive bidding and other local purchasing, bidding, and procurement requirements related to the fuels reduction activities within the Ponderosa West Grass Valley Defense Zone Project be suspended. Additionally, it is requested during the existence of said local emergency, the Purchasing Agent for the County of Nevada is authorized to enter into contracts for services related to environmental review, for the Ponderosa West Grass Valley Defense Zone Project not exceeding \$100,000.00. All actions taken by the Purchasing Agent in accordance with said Emergency Declaration will be ratified by the Board on the next Emergency Declaration Board item.

Pursuant to this local emergency, it is requested that the Director of Emergency Services for the County of Nevada be designated as the authorized representative of the County of Nevada for the purpose of receipt, processing, and coordination of all inquiries and requirements necessary to obtain available State and Federal assistance. Further, it is requested that the powers, functions, and duties of the Director of Emergency Services, or his designee, and the emergency organization of the County, be those prescribed by state law, local ordinance and resolutions of this County approved by the Board of Supervisors, as approved by the Board of Supervisors. Further, it is requested that the Director of Emergency Services or his designee be directed to immediately forward a certified copy of the resolution proclaiming a local emergency to the Governor of California, with requests that the Governor proclaim a Local Emergency within the County of Nevada, that the Governor continue to maintain a State of Emergency for the County of Nevada, and that the State of California waive regulations that may hinder fuels reduction efforts within the Ponderosa West Grass Valley Defense Zone Project area during the local emergency.

**Item Initiated and Approved by:** Steve Monaghan