



Information and General Services Department

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NEVADA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Board Agenda Memo

MEETING DATE: April 18, 2023

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: **Craig Griesbach – Office of Emergency Services**

SUBJECT: An Ordinance Amending Article 7 of Chapter IV of the Nevada County General Code regarding Hazardous Vegetation Abatement.

RECOMMENDATION: Waive further reading and adopt the attached Ordinance amending Article 7 of Chapter IV of the Nevada County General Code regarding Hazardous Vegetation Abatement.

FUNDING: N/A

ATTACHMENTS:

- An Ordinance Amending Article 7 of Chapter IV of the Nevada County General Code regarding Hazardous Vegetation Abatement
- Exhibit A, Proposed Amendments to Article 7 of Chapter IV of the Nevada County General Code regarding Hazardous Vegetation Abatement
- Exhibit B, Redlined version of the proposed Amendments to Article 7 of Chapter IV of the Nevada County General Code regarding Hazardous Vegetation Abatement

BACKGROUND:

The 2023 Nevada County Board of Supervisors emergency preparedness objective states: Lead the community in all hazards planning, preparedness, response, and recovery with a focus on wildfire. Do this by focusing on improving countywide evacuation routes and safety, continuing to strengthen early alert and critical communication systems, partnering closely with residents and community partners in emergency preparedness, defensible space, home hardening, green waste disposal, and fire-safe land stewardship. The County's Hazardous Vegetation Abatement Ordinance directly supports this objectives mission.

Wildfire continues to be one of the greatest threats to residents in Nevada County. From 2020 to 2021, 6,873,327 acres, 14,745 structures, and 36 lives were lost to wildfire in California. Dozens of residents in Nevada County have lost their homes in fires such as the Lobo, Jones, River, Rice's, and Still Fires. Employing an effective Hazardous Vegetation Abatement Ordinance helps our community be proactive in mitigating wildfire hazards that helps save lives and property.

Over the past two years the Office of Emergency Services (OES) has solicited feedback from a variety of sources and the Nevada County Board of Supervisors has requested updates to the existing Hazardous Vegetation Abatement Ordinance (#2477). On December 6, 2022 an informational presentation was provided at the Board of Supervisors meeting giving an overview of key ordinance components, recent community feedback, and potential updates to this ordinance. The attached Ordinance has been updated based on feedback from the community, recommendations from staff, and board feedback. The primary ordinance amendments include:

- Administrative and clerical updates
- Enhancing the definition of “Structure”
- Inclusion of “Ember Resistant Zone” requirements in alignment with state mandates/recommendations
- Enhancements to vegetation clearances to roofs and surrounding appurtenances
- Inclusion of “Fuel Modification Areas” for improved and unimproved parcels less than or equal to one-acre in size
- Enhancement of the 50/50 cost share provision

At the March 28, 2023 Board of Supervisors meeting this ordinance was introduced and recommended for approval. Staff recommends that the Board of Supervisors waive further reading and adopt the Ordinance with the aforementioned Ordinance amendments and enhancements to continue to improve effectiveness of the Hazardous Vegetation Abatement Ordinance.

Item Initiated by: Paul Cummings, Office of Emergency Services Program Manager

Item Approved by: Craig Griesbach, Director of Emergency Services