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NEVADA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS Board Agenda Memo

MEETING DATE: November 18, 2025

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: **Alex Keeble-Toll – Director of Emergency Services**

SUBJECT: Resolution approving the contract between VESTRA Resources Inc. and the Nevada County Office of Emergency Services for the Lower Deer Creek- Penn Valley Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project (HMGP DR-4683-1084-57) in the amount of \$547,646.00 for use during the period November 18, 2025 through July 26, 2026, authorizing the Director of Emergency Services to execute the contract, and directing the Auditor Controller to amend the fiscal year 2025/26 Emergency Services Budget (4/5 Affirmative vote required).

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt the attached Resolution.

FUNDING: The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) awarded \$653,222.25 in grant funds to the Office of Emergency Services (HMGP DR 4683-1084-57) for the Lower Deer Creek – Penn Valley Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project. OES will contract with VESTRA Resources Inc. for an amount not to exceed \$547,646.00 for environmental compliance and treatment design services. The match requirement for this grant is being satisfied by Firewise Community in-kind match. A budget amendment has been included for approval in the amount of \$547,646.00 for the revenue and expenditure activity in the Fiscal Year 2025/26 OES Budget.

BACKGROUND: The *Lower Deer Creek – Penn Valley Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project* is a 1,011-acre project designed to protect critical infrastructure, create safe ingress for first responders and egress for evacuating residents, and support watershed protection. The project, when complete, will treat 107 acres around sanitation and water treatment facilities, mitigate 726 acres of roadside vegetation, and reduce fuel loading on 178 acres in and around the Deer Creek Canyon. A resolution was approved by the Board of Supervisors to apply for grant funds from FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program on August 8, 2023 (Res. 23-420) and subsequently to accept the awarded funds on March 25, 2025 (Res. 25-105). Additionally, a resolution was approved by the Board of Supervisors

on September 9, 2023 (Res. 25-470) approving the contract between the County of Nevada and the Nevada County Resource Conservation District for project management activities which include outreach and engagement of residents in the project area, collection of landowner right-of-entry, oversight of treatment design vendor(s), and oversight of environmental compliance vendor(s).

The Lower Deer Creek - Penn Valley Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project has been scoped as two 18-month phases. The implementation plan for Phase 1 is to conduct the necessary community outreach, technical planning, cost assessments, and environmental permitting to have a shovel-ready implementation project with an accurate budget and benefit/cost analysis at the end of 18 months.

The project is focused on areas adjacent to the Lake Wildwood community in Penn Valley. Lake Wildwood is one of five communities identified in the 2024 Evacuation Study as the most evacuation-limited County-wide. The project is also within the 2025 Nevada County Community Wildfire Protection Plan's Highest Project Priorities Areas (Res. 25-064). To improve evacuation outcomes, most of the project work is focused on fuel mitigation on private parcels adjacent to primary arteries, notably Pleasant Valley Road, Mooney Flat Road, and Bitney Springs Road.

The planning area for the project is approximately 1,100 acres and a key step for the Phase 1 Mitigation Action will be to identify the appropriate treatment prescription that will protect critical infrastructure and vulnerable communities through deployment of nature-based solutions that will mitigate the risk of future devastating wildfires. The Phase 2 Mitigation Action (also 18 months) is to conduct the on-the-ground hazardous vegetation abatement actions that are identified through Phase 1.

VESTRA Resources Inc. will provide integrated environmental compliance and treatment design services, which include permitting activities, biological surveying, cultural surveying, desktop reviews, preparation of technical studies and reports, and developing a prescription plan for Phase 2. VESTRA Resources Inc. was identified as the most qualified firm with the necessary experience, expertise, and qualifications required to complete Phase 1 task through the competitive procurement process.

OES will contract with VESTRA Resources Inc. for the services described above. OES staff will provide supportive project management and will administer the grant.

Item Initiated by: Corinne Benson, Administrative Analyst II

Approved by: Alex Keeble-Toll, Director of Emergency Services