



# Information and General Services Department

## **Office of Emergency Services**

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*Information Systems  
Geographic Information Systems  
Facilities Management*

*Emergency Services  
Central Services  
Cable Television*

*Purchasing  
Airport  
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## **NEVADA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

### **Board Agenda Memo**

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**MEETING DATE:** February 28, 2023

**TO:** Board of Supervisors

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

**SUBJECT:** Acceptance of the Office of Emergency Services Request to Terminate the Local Emergencies for the August 2021 River Fire and the December 2021 Winter Storm

**RECOMMENDATION:** Accept the staff recommendations to terminate the local emergencies for the August 2021 River Fire and the December 2021 Winter Storm and adopt two resolutions to terminate the August 2021 River Fire Local Emergency and the December 2021 Winter Storm Local Emergency. This request also includes a staff recommendation to terminate the Local Public Health Emergency tied to the August 5, 2020 River Fire.

**FUNDING:** No fiscal impacts are anticipated at this time. Active reimbursement is continuing to be sought for both emergency events with applicable state and federal agencies.

**BACKGROUND:**  
**River Fire:**

The River Fire started the afternoon of 5<sup>th</sup> of August 2021 in the American Bear Canyon near Colfax. This was a human caused fire that ultimately burned 1,700 acres in Nevada County and destroyed 53 homes and 23 structures with no lives lost. The fire was suppressed by local and statewide CAL FIRE resources as well as numerous local fire assets. Local law enforcement managed the large-scale evacuation of over 4,000 residents with support from law enforcement agencies across northern California.

County of Nevada responded to the River Fire by immediately opening its Emergency Operations Center and by coordinating support to residents and first responders. This took on the form of public information updates, opening temporary evacuation centers with the Red Cross, addressing unmet needs reported by 211 and supporting the shelter of numerous displaced animals.

County of Nevada declared a local emergency on the 5<sup>th</sup> of August, which was ratified by the Board later that week. On August 5, 2021, Governor Newsom declared a State of Emergency due to Fires and Extreme Weather Conditions. President Trump later approved a Federal Presidential Declaration for the California Fires which included Nevada County and the River Fire. These declarations brought in state and federal dollars to support residents and local stakeholders with recovery costs.

Staff are currently working with the California Office of Emergency Services Recovery Team and FEMA personnel to recover \$306,347 in county response and recovery costs.

As the River Fire Recovery event is coming to an end and Debris Removal Operations are complete, staff recommend the termination of the Local Emergency Proclamation dated August 5, 2021 as well as the Local Health Emergency Proclamation dated August 6, 2021.

**December Winter Storm:**

The December 27, 2021 winter storm brought low altitude wet snow that brought down thousands of trees, powerlines and power poles across much of Western Nevada County. The snowstorm caused over 30,000 PG&E customers in Western Nevada County to lose power some for up to two weeks. Many residents were in unheated homes for days, ran out of food and water, and were unable to leave due to impassable roads.

County of Nevada responded to the Winter Storm by immediately opening its Emergency Operations Center and by coordinating support to residents and first responders. This took on the form of public information updates, opening warming centers and overnight shelters with the Red Cross, addressing unmet needs reported by 211, and supporting the shelter of numerous displaced animals.

County of Nevada declared a local emergency on December 27<sup>th</sup>, which was ratified by the Board later that week on the 30<sup>th</sup> of December. On December 30, 2021, Governor Newsom declared a State of Emergency due to the widespread multi-county damage from the winter storm event. A federal Presidential Declaration was not obtained for the December 2021 Winter Storm event.

Staff are currently working with the California Office of Emergency Services Recovery Team personnel to recover almost \$2 million dollars in county response and recovery costs.

As the December 2021 Winter Storm Recovery event is coming to an end and Debris Removal Operations are complete, staff recommends the termination of the Local Emergency Proclamation dated December 30, 2021.

**Item Initiated by:** Paul Cummings, Office of Emergency Services Program Manager  
**Approved by:** Craig Griesbach, Director of Emergency Services