

## Project Charter: Board Objective: Emergency Preparedness

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**Project Sponsor:** Craig Griesbach, Interim Director, Information and General Services Agency; Trisha Tillotson, Director, Community Development Agency

**Project Lead (Co-Leads):** Alex Keeble-Toll, David Garcia

### BACKGROUND AND PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

To further the implementation of the Board of Supervisors 2025 Emergency Preparedness Objective with a focus on evacuation routes and green waste/biomass disposal:

*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.*

At their January 2025 Board of Supervisors (BOS) Workshop, Supervisor Hall introduced a suggestion to minimize gaps in natural resource protection, proactively address environmental threats, and improve tracking and monitoring of both our natural resources in the County (environmental, unique ecosystems, threatened botanical and wildlife species) and environmental threats (mine impacts, etc.).

### PROJECT SCOPE AND TIMELINE

The Office of Emergency Services' core mission to coordinate stakeholders around planning/preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery will be operationalized by prioritizing addressing two components of hazardous vegetation management in Nevada County:

- (a) Removal of hazardous vegetation from the sides of County-maintained roads.
- (b) Removal of biomass generated through vegetation management activities.

In sum, these components will lead to reduced risk of wildfire in Nevada County and improved outcomes for the community should wildfire occur. Specifically, removal of hazardous green waste and biomass will create conditions less conducive to wildfire while roadside vegetation abatement will improve evacuation routes, allowing residents to get out and first responders to get in.

This Project Charter comprises a cross-departmental commitment to collaboration between the Office of Emergency Services and Department of Public Works; however, these are independent projects. As such, the two components are outlined separately below with unique scopes and associated timelines.

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**Project 1 (Roadside Vegetation):** Removal of hazardous vegetation from the sides of county-maintained roads.

In order to better address vegetation management along County-maintained roads the Department of Public Works (DPW) has developed a road maintenance action plan which includes:

- Beginning in 2025/2026 align road crew and contractor efforts with priorities and routes identified in the 2024 Nevada County Evacuation Study.
  - Road crews will focus on vegetation clearing along 100 miles over the next four years (Approximately 25 miles per year).
  - DPW will program \$200,000 per year (Road Fund/RMRA) to contract vegetation clearing along County-maintained roads (approximately 50 road miles per year).
  - In order to achieve a 5 year Countywide roadside vegetation clearing cycle, DPW is requesting an additional \$160,000 per year to enhance contract vegetation clearing efforts along County-maintained roads (approximately 40 miles per year).
- Beginning in 2025/2026 enhance roadside spray program
  - DPW will program \$60,000 per year (Road Fund/RMRA) to contract the spring spray program.
  - In order to enhance the roadside spray program DPW is requesting an additional \$60,000 per year for contract spray services.
  - Continue to outreach “no spray” agreements.
- Purchase necessary equipment to replace aging fleet.
- Improve transparency by making multiyear plan available online.
- Work to improve encroachment permit process for communities doing vegetation Management in County R/W.
- Staff will review the encroachment permit process for community vegetation programs and related enhancement opportunities to improve permitting accessibility.
- Continue to leverage grant funding whenever possible.
- Enhance coordination with OES.

**Project 2 (Biomass Pilot):** Removal of biomass generated through vegetation management activities.

Primary initiatives in achieving this mission include:

- Identify countywide biomass disposal needs in FY2025/2026 with a focus on three unique streams of material: (1) community green waste; (2) byproducts of OES and partner fuel mitigation projects (such as [Woodpecker Ravine](#) and [Ponderosa West Grass Valley](#)); and (3) large diameter wood from winter storms etc.
- Prioritize areas of need using the Nevada County [2024 Evacuation Study](#) and [2025 Community Wildfire Protection Plan](#).

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- Evaluate the feasibility of removing the three identified streams of material through pyrolysis using the Tigercat Carbonizers sited at La Barr Meadows in FY2024/2025.
- Implement site improvements at the La Barr Meadows site to scale up the FY2024/2025 Biomass Pilot Project while leveraging best-practices and lessons-learned during the initial pilot.
- Identify local consumers/market for value-added biochar produced as an outcome of pyrolysis using the Tigercat Carbonizers and solidify commitment for receiving this material in FY2025/2026
- Reduce fire severity and intensity by pairing defensible space, shaded fuel break implementation, and winter storm recovery with a solution to remove the biomass generated through these efforts from Nevada County.

**Project 3 (Mines):** This “project” includes an assessment of proposed solutions for the ad-hoc to review and consider for full BOS consideration. As such additional details will be forthcoming in a subsequent update to this Charter.

## High Level Risks and Assumptions:

### Project 1: Roadside Vegetation Removal

- The cost to provide services is dependent on market conditions, field conditions and availability of contractors.
- Cost and mileage estimates are based on high level cost estimates and may vary based on actual bids.
- Seasonality can affect the ability to achieve mileage goals, e.g. extreme winter or summer seasons can reduce the ability to do vegetation management work.

### Project 2: Biomass Pilot

- Federal funding freeze released on USFS Projects with impacted Assistance Listing #s
- Site improvements to support continuation and scaling up of the biomass pilot are feasible
- Availability of contractors and vendors to complete fuel mitigation projects
- Technology uncertainty to process three identified streams of material
- Market/demand uncertainty for biochar

## COMMUNICATIONS PLAN:

Refer to the following:

- 2025 OES Disaster Engagement Plan
- [Roadside Vegetation Management Project Page](#)
- [Biomass Pilot Project Page](#)
- [Critical Evacuation Route and Hazardous Vegetation Removal Project Page](#)
- [2024 Nevada County Evacuation Study](#)

## SUMMARY BUDGET:

Reference the adopted OES budget (20702) including grant awards supporting fuel mitigation activities that will take place in FY2025/2026. Reference also the adopted DPW- Roads Engineering budget (30104), including line items specifically in support of vegetation

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abatement. Budgeted staffing, initiatives, and projects are all connected to accomplishing the Emergency Preparedness Objective. Work related to the Mines project is currently occurring within existing staff resources as the activities develop. There is no proposed budget at this time, however, it is expected that changes will be proposed to this Charter in the future. The need to address hazardous vegetation along County-maintained roads and to develop permanent biomass solutions for Nevada County is driving the two projects referenced in this Charter.

Additional funding would be needed to increase hazardous vegetation abatement activities along County-maintained roads and to scale up the Biomass Pilot Project initially implemented in FY2024/2025:

- \$60,000: Spray Program
- \$160,000: Vegetation Removal
- \$664,400: Biomass Pilot Project 2.0

Charter Budget - Emergency Preparedness					
Initiative/Project	Board Workshop \$ (Board Priority Assigned GF)	Other Funded Costs	Unfunded Costs (Grant or Other Future Opportunity)	Total Cost	Revenue Note
<b>Project 1: Roadside Vegetation Removal</b>					
1a: Spray Program	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$0	\$120,000	DPW will program \$60,000 per year (Road Fund/RMRA) to contract our spring spray program and we are requesting an additional \$60,000 per year (GF) for contract spray services.
1b: Vegetation Removal	\$160,000	\$200,000	\$0	\$360,000	DPW will program \$200,000 per year (Road Fund/RMRA) to contract vegetation clearing along County maintained roads (approximately 50 road miles per year), and we are requesting an additional \$160,000 per year (GF) to enhance contract vegetation clearing efforts along County maintained roads (approximately 40 miles per year).
<b>Project 1 Subtotal</b>	<b>\$220,000</b>	<b>\$260,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$480,000</b>	
<b>Project 2: Biomass Pilot</b>					
2a. Large Diameter Wood Removal	\$176,000	\$0	\$0	\$176,000	Grappling truck services @ 2x FY2024/2025 pilot allocation.

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2b. Plans, Applications, Permits	\$27,800	\$0	\$0	\$27,800	Based on FY2024/2025 pilot.
2c. La Barr Meadows Site Improvements	\$260,000	\$0	\$0	\$260,000	Site improvements based on best-practices/lessons-learned (i.e. road improvements, gravel, hydrants), and to develop site infrastructure (i.e. restroom) so that grant funding can be sought to continue the program post FY2025/2026.
2d. Construction Management	\$30,000	\$0	\$0	\$30,000	Based on FY2024/2025 pilot.
2e. Biochar Market Development	\$16,000	\$0	\$0	\$16,000	Research and development, collaborative partnership (Resource Conservation District).
2f. Biomass Processing	\$154,600	\$0	\$0	\$154,600	Biomass processing using Tigercat Carbonizers to convert ~8,000 tons of biomass to biochar.
<b>Project 2 Subtotal</b>	<b>\$664,400</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$664,400</b>	
<b>Charter Budget Total</b>	<b>\$884,400</b>	<b>\$260,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$1,144,400</b>	

## WORKGROUP MEMBERS – ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Team Member Name	Department	Roles/Responsibility
Alex Keeble-Toll	OES	Co-Project Manager
David Garcia	DPW	Co-Project Manager
Elise Strickler	IGS Administration	Budget Support
Alicia Chaturvedula	CDA Administration	Budget Support
Ricky Martinez	OES	Project Team
Daniel Amezola	IGS Administration	Project Team
John Veasey	DPW	Project Team
Patrick Perkins	DPW	Project Team
Anabella Funk	OES (Contractor)	Communications Representative
Vera De Ferrari	CDA	Communications Representative

## 1. HIGH LEVEL REQUIREMENTS

### Major Stakeholders:

- Nevada County Board of Supervisors (*leadership, policy, and budget support*)
- Nevada County CEO Team (*leadership, policy, and budget support*)

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- Nevada County Community Development Agency (*projects, similar communities of interest, roads, infrastructure, emergency response, and subject matter expertise*)
- CAL FIRE (*emergency response, wildfire prevention/mitigation, grants, and projects*)
- Local Fire Districts (*emergency response, wildfire prevention/mitigation, and projects*)
- Law Enforcement Agencies (*emergency response, evacuation mission, wildfire prevention/mitigation, and projects*)
- Utility Service Providers (*PG&E, AT&T, Liberty, etc. related to infrastructure and bioenergy*)
- Firewise Communities (*communities of interest specifically with wildfire and hazardous fuel reduction*)
- Nevada County Coalition of Firewise Communities (*education, outreach, and communities of interest specifically with wildfire*)
- Incorporated Cities and Town (*alignment and collaboration with hazardous vegetation abatement, evacuation concerns, green waste, and biomass solutions*)
- Cal OES, FEMA, BLM and National Forest (*project alignment and state/federal resource support*)
- Nongovernmental Organizations (*wildfire prevention/mitigation, outreach, education, projects, collaboration, grants, and response/recovery resources*)
- Regional County's (*Project alignment and biomass solutions*)

Approved by (Project Sponsor, IGS & CDA):

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_