



# Information and General Services Department

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## **NEVADA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

### **Board Agenda Memo**

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**MEETING DATE:** July 23, 2019

**TO:** Board of Supervisors

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

**SUBJECT:** Resolution approving a contract between the County of Nevada and the Fire Safe Council of Nevada County pertaining to fuels reduction services within the Ponderosa West Grass Valley Defense Zone, in the maximum amount of \$940,171 for the term of July 23, 2019 through March 30, 2022.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Adopt the Resolution

**FUNDING:** These services will be paid for from the Office of Emergency Services (OES) FY 19/20 Budget. This resolution provides \$940,171 in available funds which will be distributed to the Fire Safe Council of Nevada County pursuant to the terms of the Agreement. A budget amendment was approved on July 9, 2019 by Resolution 19-402 and there is no impact on the General Fund.

**BACKGROUND:** In December 2018, Nevada County submitted the Ponderosa West Grass Valley Defense Zone Project grant application to CAL FIRE's (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection) Fire Prevention Grant Program.

On January 8, 2019, Governor Newsom implemented Executive Order N-05-19 to direct CAL FIRE to issue a 45-day report with recommendations to prevent and mitigate wildfire to the greatest extent possible with an emphasis on environmental sustainability and public health. The CAL FIRE Community Wildfire Prevention & Mitigation Report, published on March 22, 2019, included 35 priority projects across the state which would immediately help reduce public safety risk in over 200 communities. Included in the list of priority projects was the Ponderosa West Grass Valley Defense Zone ("Project"), which consists of an area of 1,200 acres located just below Rough and Ready Highway and above McCourtney Road. On the same day, Governor Newsom declared a State of Emergency which made funding available to commence the Project.

On July 9, 2019, this Board approved Resolution 19-401, proclaiming a Local Emergency in Nevada County due to the extremely dangerous fire risk conditions within the Project area. On the same day, the Board of Supervisors, per Resolution 19-402, approved a \$1 million-dollar agreement between the County and CAL FIRE pertaining to fuels reduction services covering up to 300 acres within the Project area. Additionally, Resolution 19-402 amended the OES FY 2019/20 budget to receive the funds from Cal Fire and to expend the funds for this Fire Safe Council contract and other program expenditures.

The objective of the fuels reduction within the Project area is to implement a shaded fuel management defense zone amongst homes and along roads, thinning trees, shrubs, brush and other vegetative growth. Sustainable forestry methods will be implemented to ensure that the fuel reduction treatment will result in remaining vegetation that's diverse in age, species, and size to ensure a healthy landscape.

Under the terms of this proposed Agreement, the Fire Safe Council will be responsible for coordinating the 300 acres of fuels reduction services within the Project area.

On July 9, 2019, per Resolution 19-402, the Nevada County Board of Supervisors found and determined that the fuels reduction services to be provided herein are exempt from CEQA pursuant to the Governor's March 22, 2019, Proclamation of a State Emergency, suspending Division 13 Environmental Quality provisions (commencing with section 21000) of the California Public Resources Code, and regulations adopted pursuant to that Division, because the County will include environmental protections incorporated by CAL FIRE for the Ponderosa West Grass Valley Defense Zone Project, and through the implementation of those protections to public health and the environment applied to the Project by the California Natural Resources Agency and the California Environmental Protection Agency to ensure the environment will be adequately protected.

Prior to the commencement of these fuels reduction services, the Fire Safe Council will be required to incorporate the environmental protection measures and best management practices, as well as any and all other environmental protection measures and best management practices included in biological and cultural studies on the Ponderosa West Grass Valley Defense Zone area that will be prepared on behalf of the County.

The Ponderosa West Grass Valley Defense Zone Project was written with collaboration of the Fire Safe Council of Nevada County. The County and Fire Safe Council intend to explore an amendment to this Agreement at a future date to include fuels reduction services for the remaining 900 acres of the Project area.

**Item Initiated by:** Jeff Pettitt

**Approved by:** Steve Monaghan