



Information and General Services Agency

950 Maidu Avenue
Nevada City, CA 95959
Phone: 530-265-1238
Fax: 530-265-7112

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NEVADA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Board Agenda Memo

MEETING DATE: March 26, 2024

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Craig Griesbach – Director of Emergency Services

SUBJECT: Resolution accepting state and federal funds in the amount of \$345,631.03 for reimbursement of River Fire response and recovery costs

RECOMMENDATION: Accept the state and federal funds received by the County of Nevada stemming from the August 2021 River Fire.

FUNDING: County of Nevada was reimbursed by the state and FEMA \$345,631.03 of the \$360,280.18 in county costs claimed.

BACKGROUND: The River Fire started the afternoon of August 4, 2021 adjacent to the Bear River and the town of Colfax. This was a human caused fire that ultimately burned 2,619 acres in both Placer and Nevada counties and drove evacuation of 4,200 Nevada County residents. It also destroyed 51 homes and 31 accessory 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 evacuations 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 August 5th, which was ratified by the Board of Supervisors the following week. On August 5th, Governor Newsom declared a State of Emergency due to Fires and Extreme Weather Conditions in the state. 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.

In 2022 & 2023 staff worked through the disbursement of funds from the state and federal reimbursement for the River Fire costs to the County. The claim to FEMA was for \$360,280.18 which included County staff time, EOC costs, animal and human sheltering, debris removal and law enforcement mutual aid. Of the \$360,280.18 claimed \$345,631.03 was reimbursed (95%). These funds were distributed to law enforcement mutual aid partners, the Fairgrounds for animal sheltering and the schools for their support in providing shelter for those displaced by the fire.

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