



Information and General Services Department

Office of Emergency Services

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NEVADA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Board Agenda Memo

MEETING DATE: May 25, 2021

TO: Board of Supervisors

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

SUBJECT: Resolution Proclaiming a Local Emergency in Nevada County due to the extreme drought conditions and recurrent Public Safety Power Shutoff events

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt the Resolution.

FUNDING: The initial response actions will be from the General Fund and will, depending on scale, be supplemented by State/Federal Government monies.

BACKGROUND:

The State of California is responding to a statewide drought that directly affects Nevada County. This drought is driven by climate change and will have an ongoing effect on our environment, economy and residents. California is in its second year of dry conditions and much of the State is in either a Severe or Extreme Drought.

Locally most of Nevada County is under an Extreme Drought which, by definition, affects local livestock pasture and feeding, agriculture cycles and agricultural irrigation timing and availability. This drought influences local vegetation and wildlife, stressing it and potentially making it susceptible to disease. Rainfall totals are lower than average throughout Nevada County which is reporting 50% of its average rainfall as of April 30, 2021 while the Northern Sierra Precipitation is reporting 47% of average as of May 17, 2021.

A more immediate concern is the drought effect on the local wildfire threat. The drought will continue to dry out our forests and fuels that are already struggling from previous years droughts and climate change. These dry fuels will be more susceptible to burn with the increased fire weather our community is seeing. Lastly the dry fuels and increased fire weather will increase the risk to PG&E's infrastructure, likely driving increased duration and frequency of Public Safety Power Shutoff in our community.

On April 21, 2021, the Governor of the State of California Proclaimed a State of Emergency to exist in California due to the current and potential impacts caused by the widespread drought conditions. Nevada County was added to the Governors Drought Proclamation on May 10, 2021.

On April 28, 2021, the Nevada Irrigation District ("District") proclaimed a drought emergency for its service area which includes Nevada, Placer and Yuba

counties. This moves the District into Stage 1 of its Drought Contingency Plan. In the District precipitation was well below average in March and April of this year; high winds and above-average temperature have dried the watershed; and irrigation season startup demands are at mid-summer levels. The District has forecasted that carryover storage could drop to 110,700 acre-feet. It is a level not seen since 2001.

An emergency proclamation is before this Board for confirmation and ratification.

This Local Emergency Proclamation will enable Nevada County to more effectively respond to the drought conditions and the Public Safety Power Shutoff events in our community, seek and utilize mutual aid, obtain state and federal funds (if available), and ensure that the County's resources and economy, as well as the community at large, have all the necessary tools at their disposal to endure this ongoing challenge.

Further, pursuant to the Local Emergency proclamation, it is requested that the Director of Emergency Services for the County of Nevada be designated as the authorized representative of the County of Nevada for the purpose of receipt, processing, and coordination of all inquiries and requirements necessary to obtain available State and Federal assistance, and that the powers, functions, and duties of the Director of Emergency Services, or his designee, and the emergency organization of the County, be those prescribed by state law, local ordinance and resolutions of this County approved by the Board of Supervisors.

Finally, it is requested that certified copies of this resolution be immediately forwarded to the Governor of California, to formally align our County with the Governor's Proclamation.

Today's recommended actions will provide the County additional powers to coordinate local efforts and identify resources that may be necessary to fully address the Statewide Drought and its effects locally.

Item Initiated and Approved by: Steve Monaghan