

*Is this grant request to support immediate relief/response to a specific active (or recent) natural hazard event?*

Yes

*What is the amount of the grant you are requesting?*

\$100,000

*What type of event will this grant be used to respond to?*

Extreme weather

*Has the event been declared a disaster by a government body? (check all that apply):*

Yes, County and State

*Briefly describe the event and its impact on your community to date in terms of economic impact, loss of life, destruction of property, displaced persons, etc.*

On December 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021 the Nevada County Board of Supervisors along with the State of California proclaimed an emergency in response to an intense winter snowstorm. On the morning of December 27<sup>th</sup> 2021, this storm brought excessive amounts of snow to areas that typically receive little to no snow. The effects were devastating, as the storm brought down an extreme number of trees and limbs blocking roadways, destroying power poles, leaving thousands without power, and leaving a tremendous volume of down and dead vegetation throughout the County. Some areas were hit harder than others. This emergency drove approximately 1,000 of the Nevada County's residents to shelters in search of housing, warmth, or electrical power over a two-week period. In the aftermath of the storm hundreds of calls for assistance were received by 211 from residents reporting blocked roadways as well as damage to infrastructure and homes. Coordinated storm response and rescue efforts helped ensure that no lives were lost, and County and community partners responded with evacuation support, wood and propane assistance, food and water deliveries, sheltering resources, and more. Some of the hardest hit communities were Alta Sierra, Banner Mountain, and Cascade Shores. Over 270 miles of publicly maintained roads required clearing due to imminent fire and life safety hazards on primary ingress and egress routes. The County of Nevada and its local agencies have documented almost \$10 million in response and recovery costs, including an estimated \$5 million to clear downed trees from public roads and right of ways.

One of the lasting results from this storm event for Nevada County is the unusually high amount of hazardous vegetation which is quickly making the county extremely vulnerable to wildfire. Community concern and motivation is high. The storm debris crisis is visible throughout the County, and the desire for response has been seen in the record-breaking amounts of green waste being dropped off by residents during county sponsored free drop off events as well as reported by local Fire Departments including Cal Fire.

*Describe your community foundation's plans for using these funds.*

In response to the high levels of hazardous vegetation left by the December snowstorm, Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation plans to partner with the County of Nevada in consultation with the CA

Governor's Office of Emergency Services to provide a Storm Debris Response Micro-Grant Program. This program will be directed at supporting community action in response to storm related hazardous vegetation. Specifically, our grant program offers financial support to communities and homeowners to implement hazardous vegetation management including;

- Increased defensible space around homes
- Removal of hazardous vegetation from private property
- Clearing of evacuation routes on private roadways

This has been determined as a high priority for this community and the County and State Office of Emergency Services. While the County maintains public roadways, resources to support private land are scarce, and the need is urgent.

The Storm Debris Response Micro-Grant program would make grants of a total of 26 micro-grants of \$3,600 each available to existing National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) certified Firewise communities located in Nevada County to implement projects immediately. Firewise communities will be encouraged to apply for a micro-grant to fund a project in their community to manage storm related vegetation, clean-up and debris processing. Project examples could include renting a chipper for community use, contracting for transportation of downed vegetation to processing sites, renting equipment or hiring a contractor to clear evacuation routes on private roadways.

There is currently little assistance or funding provided to private property owners who are struggling to remove hazardous vegetation and create defensible space around their homes. The Storm Debris Response Micro-Grant program would help fill the gap between local governments responsibility to clear right of ways and property owners' responsibility to address their parcels.

*How do you envision funds from this grant advancing equity and helping you reach the most vulnerable or underserved members in your community? How will you know if you are reaching them?*

Nevada County has one of the highest numbers of NFPA certified Firewise communities in California covering a majority of the county. Nevada County's Firewise communities are all-volunteer organizations without paid staff, dues collection or budget leaving them with little resources to defend their homes from wildfire. Providing a micro-grant program supporting Firewise communities would be a step toward empowering communities vulnerable to wildfire as a result of the December 27<sup>th</sup> snow-storm event.

This is an equity-focused program. Approximately 102,000 people in rural Nevada County live across 978 square miles of diverse and rugged rural lands in the Northern Sierra Nevada range. The overwhelming majority, 91%, of Nevada County has been determined by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's Fire and Resource Assessment Program to be either a high or very high fire hazard severity zone. The impacts of climate change, extreme fire and extreme weather-induced events, have a disproportionate impact on the elderly, individuals on a fixed or low income, residents without access to transportation, as well as those who are socially and physically isolated. Nearly one third (28.4%) of the Nevada County population is 65 years of age or older; 13.6% higher than the state average. Our grant program offers financial support to communities and homeowners to implement hazardous vegetation management including;

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Funding community efforts to accomplish these projects will reducing risk as well as promote empowerment and peace of mind.

Our proposed program will also specifically ensure that underserved communities are prioritized, using a scoring tool that will elevate applications from Firewise communities in underserved locations. The tool created uses data collected by the County of Nevada Department of Social Services aggregating the locations of CalWORKS, CalFRESH, Medi-Cal and other support service recipients into zip codes allowing for the prioritization of zip codes with the highest underserved populations.