



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 10/19/2021

File #: 21-1437

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Public Works

Agenda Section: Consent

SUBJECT:

Authorization for the Humboldt County Department of Public Works to Accept and Administer Funding Made Available through the 2021 Grants Clearinghouse Fire Prevention Program and Approval of the Associated Supplemental Budget (4/5 vote required)

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Authorize the Humboldt County Public Works Director, or a designee thereof, to execute a grant agreement with the California Fire Safe Council and any other documents, including, without limitation, professional services agreements, necessary to accept and administer funding made available through the 2021 Grants Clearinghouse Fire Prevention Program; and
2. Approve, and authorize the Humboldt County Auditor-Controller to process, the attached supplemental budget request regarding the Community Wildfire Protection Plan ("CWPP") Phase III Part II: Fire-adapted Landscapes and Safe Homes Project ("Phase III Part II Project"). (4/5 vote required).

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

United States Forest Service ("USFS") Cooperative Fire Program, State Fire Assistance and Tree Mortality grant through the California Fire Safe Council's 2021 Grants Clearinghouse Fire Prevention Program
Northcoast Resource Partnership Fund (1720)

DISCUSSION:

In June of 2021, the County of Humboldt, by and through its Department of Public Works - Natural Resources Planning, submitted an application to the 2021 Grants Clearinghouse Fire Prevention Program. In September of 2021, the county's application was selected for funding. Staff is now requesting that the Board authorize the Humboldt County Public Works Director, or a designee thereof, to accept and administer an award of \$180,300 to fund the implementation of the Phase III Part II Project.

The Phase III Part II project is designed to incentivize and empower landowners to effectively increase their fire resiliency and build off the work of previous phases. The Humboldt County Community

Wildfire Protection Plan update, completed in early 2019, represents Phase I of the Humboldt County Fire Safe Council's increased focus on preparing local communities for wildfire. Phase II (Part I and II) and Phase III Part I are currently underway. Phase II includes community "Chipper Days", model defensible space projects, and roadside clearance work throughout the county. Phase III provides for the continuation of the Fire-adapted Landscapes and Safe Homes ("FLASH") Program-a landowner cost-share program for property owners seeking to reduce hazardous fuels in the defensible space zone around their homes and other strategic areas. The Phase III Part II Project will continue the FLASH Program and expand upon the scope of the Phase III CWPP Implementation Project funded through a California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection ("CAL FIRE") grant. The CAL FIRE grant has been leveraged as a match to this federally funded award. These two (2) sources of funding will be combined to support this important work, using the recently updated CWPP as an action guide.

Specifically, the Phase III Part II Project will directly reduce wildfire risk through two (2) distinct components under the umbrella of the Humboldt County FLASH Program: delivery of prescribed fire assessments and burn plans developed by one (1) or more of the state's first-ever certified burn bosses; and expansion of the FLASH cost-share program for hazardous fuels reduction.

Accordingly, staff recommends that the Board authorize the Humboldt County Public Works Director, or a designee thereof, to execute a grant agreement with the California Fire Safe Council and any other documents necessary to accept and administer funding made available through the 2021 Grants Clearinghouse Fire Prevention Program.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Acceptance of the funding made available through the 2021 Grants Clearinghouse Fire Prevention Program will bring \$180,300 of federal funding into Humboldt County to support continued work to reduce the vulnerability of rural communities to damage from wildfire. The recommended supplemental budget for fiscal year (FY) 2021-22 will increase appropriations in the Public Works Natural Resources budget (1720289) by \$180,300.

Federal grant funds will be matched by \$182,500 of in-kind contributions from UC Cooperative Extension, CAL FIRE, and the County of Humboldt. \$40,000 of the match committed by the County of Humboldt will be generated through documentation of landowner in-kind match contributions associated with completing project-related work. The County of Humboldt's remaining \$5,000 of match and CAL FIRE's grant match commitment in the amount of \$134,500 are already budgeted for in the approved FY 2021-22 Natural Resources budget (1720289). UC Cooperative Extension has committed an in-kind match contribution of \$3,000. As a result, acceptance of the funding made available through the 2021 Grants Clearinghouse Fire Prevention Program will not impact the Humboldt County General Fund.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:

The recommended actions support the Board of Supervisors Strategic Framework by creating opportunities for improved safety and health.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The Humboldt County Fire Safe Council and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Board of Supervisors may choose not to accept the funding made available through the 2021 Grants Clearinghouse Fire Prevention Program. However, this alternative is not recommended because of the community fire safety benefits that will be gained from implementation of the CWPP Phase III Part II: Fire-adapted Landscapes and Safe Homes Project.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. California Fire Safe Council Grants Clearinghouse Proposal
2. California Fire Safe Council 2021 Grant Award Announcements
3. Supplemental Budget Request Regarding the CWPP Phase III Part II: Fire-adapted Landscapes and Safe Homes Project

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No.: E-4; C-4; C-13; D-14; C-20; C-20

Meeting of: 2/10/09; 12/13/11; 1/21/14; 12/26/18, 1/8/19, 10/1/19

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