



Westhaven Volunteer Fire Department

446 6th Avenue • P.O. Box 2143 • Trinidad, CA 95570

May 28, 2020

RE: Request to the County of Humboldt for FY19-20 emergency funding

Dear Humboldt County Board of Supervisors,

The Westhaven Volunteer Fire Department (WVFD) has provided fire protection and other emergency response services to the greater Westhaven community since 1950. Our service area covers a large portion of County Service Area #4 (CSA4), for which the County of Humboldt is responsible for providing fire protection service. WVFD's ability to respond with a type 1 structure engine as well as a 2,500-gallon water tender are critical elements of the fire services provided to CSA4.

The response capabilities of WVFD have resulted in an improvement of the ISO fire protection classification from a 10 up to a 5 for the portion of CSA4 that overlaps with our service area; this improved ISO rating can be an important factor in the ability of our community members to secure affordable insurance for their homes and property.

WVFD has benefited greatly from Measure Z funding, which has enabled the Department to make numerous upgrades to vital equipment. However, WVFD receives no portion of the CSA4 fees collected by the County, and is entirely dependent on community fundraising and donations to cover our annual operating costs, with the majority of our funding coming from the annual Westhaven Wild Blackberry Festival. 2020 marks the 60th anniversary of the Festival, the focus of which is the sale of over 1,000 blackberry pies that are made by the Westhaven Ladies Club from January through July every year.

This year, the social distancing requirements of COVID-19 will result in the Blackberry Festival either being canceled entirely or dramatically reduced in scope and scale (the Ladies Club has not been able to gather and make pies for the majority of their pie-making season). The loss of funding from the Festival will cause a significant shortfall in WVFD operating budget for the coming year. Due to this impending budget shortfall, WVFD is respectfully requesting that the County consider emergency funding to WVFD of \$25,000 as part of the County's FY19-20 budget. This funding will help cover critical operating costs that include equipment and vehicle maintenance, fuel, insurance, and other expenses that are essential to our ability to sustain and improve service to our community and CSA4.

WVFD greatly appreciates your consideration of this request; please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or we can provide any addition information.

Sincerely,

Matthew R. Marshall

Assistant Fire Chief

Westhaven Volunteer Fire Department