



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 3/3/2020

File #: 20-231

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Supervisor Rex Bohn
Supervisor Steve Madrone

Agenda Section: Initiated by Board Member

SUBJECT:

Master Good Neighbor Agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Six Rivers National Forest Regarding the Provision of Authorized Forest, Rangeland and Watershed Restoration Services (Supervisor Rex Bohn and Supervisor Steve Madrone)

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Approve, and authorize, the Humboldt County Public Works Director, or a designee thereof, to execute a substantially similar version of the attached master good neighbor agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Six Rivers National Forest regarding the provision of authorized forest, rangeland and watershed restoration services;
2. Authorize the Humboldt County Public Works Director, or a designee thereof, to execute any and all subsequent amendments to the attached master good neighbor agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Six Rivers National Forest, after review and approval by County Counsel, Risk Management and the County Administrative Office; and
3. Authorize the Humboldt County Public Works Director, or a designee thereof, to execute any and all subsequent supplemental project agreements with the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Six Rivers National Forest regarding the provision of specific forest, rangeland and watershed restoration services, and any amendments thereto, after review and approval by County Counsel, Risk Management and the County Administrative Office.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

General Fund and Grants

DISCUSSION:

Recent changes in federal law, allow for counties to enter into good neighbor agreements with the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service regarding the provision of authorized forest, rangeland and watershed restoration services. Six Rivers National Forest offered the County of Humboldt the opportunity to enter into a master good neighbor agreement to formalize the process of developing specific mutually beneficial projects and jointly seeking implementation revenue. The

purpose of the attached master good neighbor agreement is to provide a framework for, and to document the cooperative effort between the Six Rivers National Forest and the County of Humboldt regarding, the provision of authorized forest, rangeland and watershed restoration services.

All projects conceived under the attached master good neighbor agreement will undergo a collaborative process. The collaborative process will ensure that both Six Rivers National Forest and the County of Humboldt understand the goals and objectives of the agreed upon restoration services and all necessary rules, regulations and policies as outlined in the attached master good neighbor agreement and the corresponding supplemental project agreements. Multiple supplemental project agreements may be developed under and within the term of the attached master good neighbor agreement to implement specific projects once they are identified, fully developed and funded. Potential project types include, without limitation, activities such as: forest thinning and limbing to reduce wildfire hazards and support improvements to forest health; roadside fuel breaks to facilitate safe emergency response and evacuation, as well as the reduction of wildfire ignition hazards; road maintenance; aquatic organism passage improvements (e.g. culvert replacement); landslide response and restoration; and invasive species control.

Entering into the attached master good neighbor agreement is consistent with recommendations in the Humboldt County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (“CWPP”). The attached master good neighbor agreement and subsequent supplemental project agreements will support implementation of recommendations in the wildfire preparedness, disaster preparedness, restoration of beneficial Fire and integrated planning countywide CWPP action plans. The collaborative project identification process will include a review and evaluation of community identified actions maintained within the Humboldt County CWPP and the associated CWPP Geographic Information System (GIS) Web Portal. Project identification will also be informed, where applicable, by the Humboldt County Pavement Management Program. Work on Humboldt County roads, within or near, National Forest Services lands, that require improved pavement condition index ratings, may be prioritized to support safe ingress and egress, reduce fire ignition risks and reduce potential impacts on watershed health, including, without limitation, fish and wildlife habitat.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There will be staff time associated with executing the attached master good neighbor agreement, developing project details for subsequent supplemental project agreements and collaborating with Six Rivers National Forest staff to identify and secure revenue sources. The amount of staff time required is currently unknown. Staffing to support this type of partnership and program development is already included in the fiscal year 2019-2020 budget and future staffing will be supported by grants and/or United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service revenue. Cost savings will also be achieved by Six Rivers National Forest staff providing support for project components that might otherwise be the responsibility of the county, such as treatment prescription design and environmental review.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:

The recommended actions support the Board of Supervisors’ Strategic Framework by creating opportunities for improved safety and health, protecting vulnerable populations and strengthening climate change resiliency.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

None

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Board discretion

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft Master Good Neighbor Agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Six Rivers National Forest Regarding the Provision of Authorized Forest, Rangeland and Watershed Restoration Services

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No.: N/A

Meeting of: N/A

File No.: N/A