



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 12/15/2020

File #: 20-1556

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Public Works

Agenda Section: Consent

SUBJECT:

Allocation of Senior Environmental Analyst in Natural Resources Planning Division

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Approve the allocation of one 1.0 full time equivalent (FTE) senior environmental analyst position (salary range 433, class 520) in the Natural Resources Planning Division (budget unit 289) of Public Works effective the pay period following Board approval; and
2. Approve the attached appropriation transfer.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

State and Federal grants
General Fund

DISCUSSION:

The Natural Resources Planning Division (budget unit 289) of Public Works manages programs and projects in two primary practice areas. This agenda item recommends an update to the division's organizational structure to create two branches that better align with these practice areas.

Since 2005, Humboldt County has managed multi-year grants on behalf of the seven-county North Coast Resource Partnership ("NCRP") related to integrated regional water management, watershed health, fire resilience, and energy conservation. Grants for the NCRP are typically provided by the California Department of Water Resources and California Natural Resources Agency with funds from various sources including state bond measures (e.g., Proposition 1, Proposition 68, and California Climate Investment funds). For work on behalf of the NCRP, the Natural Resources Planning Division works closely with the NCRP's planning consultant (West Coast Watershed), tribal outreach coordinator (California Indian Environmental Alliance), and executive committee. In addition, the Natural Resources Planning Division serves as the sponsor and staff support for the Humboldt County Fire Safe Council and manages programs related to wildfire planning and preparedness and hazard mitigation. Grants for wildfire planning and preparedness are typically provided by California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection ("CAL FIRE") and the U.S. Forest Service. While these

funding programs continue to evolve based on shifting needs and priorities associated with climate change, wildfire threats, and other factors, they have been consistent and reliable since the division was integrated into Public Works in 2012.

Historically the role of the Natural Resources Planning Division was focused primarily on serving as fiscal agent and grant administrator. Within the last few years, the Natural Resources Planning Division has expanded its role to include grant application development, project management, technical assistance, and stakeholder engagement. The project management role requires independently leading implementation projects and providing oversight and direction of consultants and contractors. The technical assistance role requires detailed knowledge of state and federal environmental laws and regulations along with current practices in vegetation management and fuels reduction. The stakeholder engagement role requires developing professional relationships with a range of stakeholders and the ability to facilitate collaborative processes. The Natural Resources Planning Division has also assumed the role of Geographic Information System administrator for Public Works, which involves database management and implementation of geospatial analysis and mapping projects.

Currently the allocated positions for the Natural Resources Planning Division include natural resources planning manager, senior environmental analyst, and two environmental analysts. Public Works recommends that the Board of Supervisors approve the allocation of one additional senior environmental analyst position (salary range 433, class 520) within the Natural Resources Planning Division to better align with the current practice areas, roles, and workload of the division. The Natural Resources Planning Division would have two branches, each with a senior environmental analyst and environmental analyst, corresponding to the division's two primary practice areas. Work by staff would continue to be collaborative, flexible, and integrated with staff able to work on projects within either branch.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

This position will be funded primarily through grants received from state and federal funding agencies and partially by the Natural Resource Planning Division's allocation from the Humboldt County General Fund. This position will be supported by existing grant awards which are already included in the fiscal year (FY) 2020-21 budget at budget lines 1720289-4510 and 4555. Specifically, funding for this position will come from multiple, multi-year grant programs, including: the Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program (a planning project that is a precursor to future implementation funds); the Disadvantaged Community and Tribal Involvement Program; and multiple Humboldt County Community Wildfire Protection Plan Implementation projects (state and federally funded). In the near future, this position will be supported with funds from Six Rivers National Forest to implement work under the recently executed Good Neighbor Authority Agreement. In addition, the division receives an allocation from the General Fund to cover expenses that are not reimbursable by grants and to support the pursuit of additional grant funding. The salary and benefit cost for 1.0 FTE senior environmental analyst Step 1A, salary range 433, class 520, for six months in FY 2020-21 is \$41,155. The approved budget for FY 2020-21 is sufficient to support the requested action without a supplemental budget request. The attached appropriation transfer (Attachment 1) is necessary to move funds into the appropriate expenditure lines for FY 2020-21. Allocation of this position will result in a net savings by

allowing workload to be shifted from consultants to staff. Funding for this position will be incorporated into the budget for subsequent fiscal years. There is no additional impact anticipated to the Humboldt County General Fund.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:

This action supports your Board's Strategic Framework by creating opportunities for improved safety and health and building interjurisdictional and regional cooperation.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

California Department of Water Resources, California Natural Resources Agency, CAL FIRE, U.S. Forest Service

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Board could choose not to approve the allocation. However, this is not recommended as it will

have a negative impact on the ability of the Natural Resources Planning Division to secure grants for and deliver projects related to watershed health, integrated regional water management, fire resilience, and wildfire planning and preparedness.

ATTACHMENTS:

Appropriation transfer

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No.: N/A

Meeting of: N/A

File No.: N/A