



# COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 5/25/2021

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File #: 21-674

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**To:** Board of Supervisors

**From:** Supervisor Mike Wilson

**Agenda Section:** Time Certain Matter

**SUBJECT:**

9:05 a.m. - Drought Conditions and Implications for Wildfire Risk and Water Availability

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Receive presentations regarding the impacts of drought conditions; and
2. Provide comments and direction to staff as appropriate.

**SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

General Fund (1100)

**DISCUSSION:**

On May 10, 2021, Governor Newsom expanded his drought emergency proclamation (Attachment 1) to include a total of 41 counties, including Humboldt County. The Governor's proclamation highlighted the acute drought impacts in the Klamath River watershed as well as other areas around the State. On May 13, 2021, the Yurok Tribe adopted a resolution (Attachment 2) declaring a state of emergency due to drought. Attachment 3 contains a map depicting drought conditions within California as of May 13, 2021. Speakers have been invited to discuss the effects of the drought and potential response actions.

Kathleen Zontos, hydrologist with the National Weather Service, will provide an update on current drought conditions and the prognosis for this summer. Kurt McCray, Unit Chief of the CAL FIRE Humboldt-Del Norte Unit, will address wildfire preparedness. Chris Harris, Business Manager for the Humboldt Bay Municipal Water District, will discuss water storage conditions at Ruth Lake and how the District is preparing for drought. A representative from the Yurok Tribe has been invited to address the threats facing the Yurok Reservation and Klamath River watershed. Craig Tucker, Natural Resources Consultant for the Karuk Tribe, will discuss impacts on Klamath River salmon and recent developments from the emergency working group convened by Congressman Jared Huffman. Hank Seemann, Public Works Deputy-Director, will provide an update on conditions in the lower Eel River and Humboldt County's preparation of a groundwater sustainability plan for the Eel River Valley groundwater basin. John Ford, Building and Planning Director, will provide an update on permitting

for new groundwater extraction wells and drought-related issues within Building and Planning's jurisdiction. Ryan Derby, Emergency Services Manager with the Humboldt County Sheriff's Office of Emergency Services, will review his recent communications with stakeholders and address the topic of a local drought emergency declaration.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

The recommended action involves receiving information and input from invited speakers and the public. Therefore, this action will not impact the General Fund.

**STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:**

This action supports your Board's Strategic Framework by managing our resources to ensure sustainability of services and creating opportunities for improved safety and health.

**OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:**

National Weather Service, CAL FIRE, Yurok Tribe, Karuk Tribe, Humboldt Bay Municipal Water District, Building and Planning, Public Works, Office of Emergency Services

**ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Board discretion

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Governor Newsom's Proclamation of Drought Emergency (May 10, 2021)
2. Yurok Tribe State of Emergency Declaration (May 13, 2021)
3. U.S. Drought Monitoring Map (May 13, 2021)
4. HBMWD Submittal

**PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:**

Board Order No.: N/A

Meeting of: N/A

File No.: N/A