



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

Legislation Text

File #: 19-1550, **Version:** 1

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Public Works

Agenda Section: Consent

SUBJECT:

Resolution Authorizing the Humboldt County Department of Public Works to Apply For, and Accept, Funding Made Available through the California Climate Investment Fire Prevention Grant Program

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Adopt Resolution No. _____ (Attachment 1) authorizing the Humboldt County Department of Public Works Director to apply for, and accept, if awarded, funding made available through the California Climate Investment Fire Prevention Grant Program in order to fund implementation of the Humboldt Community Wildfire Protection Plan; and
2. Direct the Clerk of the Board to provide a fully executed original copy of the attached resolution to the Humboldt County Department of Public Works for submission to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

Natural Resource Planning (1720), California Climate Investment Fire Prevention Grant Program

DISCUSSION:

The California Climate Investment Fire Prevention Grant Program provides funding for local projects and activities that address the risk of wildfire and reduce wildfire potential to forested and forest adjacent communities. Funded activities include, without limitation, hazardous fuel reduction, fire planning and fire prevention education with an emphasis on improving public health and safety while reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Activities funded under this program are consistent with those recommended in the Humboldt County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (“CWPP”). The recommended actions will allow the Humboldt County Department of Public Works to prepare and submit a grant application to support CWPP implementation.

The proposed CWPP implementation project will help the county work toward the Wildfire Preparedness Goal of the CWPP Countywide Action Plan to increase community resilience and adaptation to wildfire. Specifically, the project proposes to revive the Humboldt County Fire-adapted Landscapes and Safe Homes (“FLASH”) Program, a landowner cost-share program designed to incentivize local property owners to take responsibility for reducing their risk to wildfire by thinning

flammable vegetation around their homes and along their access routes. This well-known and well-loved program ran for several years supported by various cycles of grant funding. Since 2010, the FLASH Program has provided technical assistance and cost-share to support over nine hundred (900) acres of hazardous fuels reduction on residential properties, as well as over two hundred forty (240) home risk assessments and over seven hundred eighty (780) site visits conducted by FLASH field technicians to recommend and monitor prescription recommendations. Given its history of success, the Humboldt County Fire Safe Council recommends that the county seek funding to revitalize the FLASH Program. The grant application for funding, made available through the California Climate Investment Fire Prevention Grant Program, is due on December 4, 2019. If the proposed CWPP implementation project is selected, a grant agreement will be executed, and work will begin in early 2020.

Accordingly, staff recommends that the Board adopt the attached resolution which authorizes the Humboldt County Department of Public Works Director, or a designee thereof, to apply for, and accept, if awarded, funding made available through the California Climate Investment Fire Prevention Grant Program.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

If awarded, the funding made available through the California Climate Investment Fire Prevention Grant Program will provide much-needed revenue to supplement the funds that the county is already investing in community wildfire preparedness and roadside vegetation maintenance. Matching funds will be committed to the proposed CWPP implementation project, based on the existing annual activities conducted by Department of Public Works staff. In addition, matching funds will be generated through the cost-share contributions of participating property owners.

The expense of preparing the application for funding made available through the California Climate Investment Fire Prevention Grant Program will be covered by a fiscal year 2019-2020 General Fund allocation provided by the Board of Supervisors to the Department of Public Works, Natural Resources Planning budget (revenue account 1720-289). One of the intended uses of this allocation was to research funding sources and write grant proposals to support actions recommended in the Humboldt County CWPP.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:

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

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

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

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Board may choose not to adopt the attached resolution authorizing the Humboldt County Department of Public Works Director, or a designee thereof, to apply for, and accept, if awarded, funding made available through the California Climate Investment Fire Prevention Grant Program. However, this alternative is not recommended because of the community fire safety benefits that could

be gained through the proposed CWPP implementation project.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Resolution Authorizing the Humboldt County Department of Public Works to Apply For, and Accept, Funding Made Available through the California Climate Investment Fire Prevention Grant Program

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No.: N/A

Meeting of: N/A