



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

Legislation Text

File #: 22-3, Version: 1

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Public Works

Agenda Section: Consent

SUBJECT:

Authorization for the Humboldt County Department of Public Works to Accept and Administer Funding Made Available through the Governor's Office of Planning and Research, Woody Feedstock Aggregation Pilot Program and Approval of the Associated Supplemental Budget (4/5 vote required)

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Authorize the Humboldt County Public Works Director, or a designee thereof, to execute a grant agreement with the Governor's Office of Planning and Research and any other documents, including, without limitation, professional services agreements, necessary to accept and administer funding made available through the Woody Feedstock Aggregation Pilot Program; and
2. Approve, and authorize the Humboldt County Auditor-Controller to post the attached supplemental budget request and make technical corrections as needed (4/5 vote required).

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

Governor's Office of Planning and Research, Woody Feedstock Aggregation Pilot Program (Senate Bill 85, Section 2)

DISCUSSION:

The North Coast Resource Partnership ("NCRP") was initiated in 2004 as a water management collaborative between the counties of Humboldt, Sonoma, Modoc, Mendocino, Trinity, Del Norte and Siskiyou. The NCRP is now a successful coalition of North Coast Counties and Tribes that has brought over \$100,000,000 in highly competitive funding to the north coast region. The Leadership Council, the governing body for the NCRP, is comprised of representatives from each of the seven (7) NCRP counties and Tribal areas and acts as the North Coast Regional Water Management Group. In 2005, the NCRP Leadership Council designated the County of Humboldt as the Regional Contract Administrator for the NCRP.

The NCRP was recently selected as one (1) of five (5) pilot project proponents under the Governor's Office of Planning and Research, ("OPR") Woody Feedstock Aggregation Pilot Program. California's Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan, a Comprehensive Strategy of the Governor's Forest

Management Task Force, was released in January 2021. The strategy included several actions for the OPR to implement including “3.10 Address Feedstock Barriers through Pilot Projects: OPR will develop five pilot projects to test new mechanisms for developing long-term feedstock contracts. Information and templates from the pilot projects will be shared broadly to provide a menu of options for broader adoption.”

Senate Bill 85, The Budget Act of 2020, made appropriations for the support of state government for the 2020-21 fiscal year. This bill amended the Budget Act of 2020 by amending and adding items of appropriation and making other changes. “This bill would declare that it is to take effect immediately as a Budget Bill.” Section 2 of the SB 85 includes funding for the Pilot Projects in the Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan:

“The funds appropriated in this item are available for support or local assistance and shall be used to (a) develop a framework for the state’s wood utilization policies and priorities, (b) support new long-term wood feedstock pilot projects, (c) spur innovation in the wood sector, (d) partner with the IBank to develop a focused market strategy, and (e) complete a statewide wood products workforce assessment. These funds are available for expenditure or encumbrance until June 30, 2022, and for liquidation until June 30, 2025.”

The Joint Institute for Wood Products Innovation at the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection in collaboration with the OPR developed draft criteria for the Pilot Projects and provided areas/regions of the state and entities within the regions to manage and implement the Pilot Projects. Those regions and pilot entities include the North Bay Area/Marin County, managed by the Marin Resource Conservation District; the North Coast, managed by the North Coast Resource Partnership; Northeastern/Shasta region, managed by the Pit River Resource Conservation and Fall River Resource Conservation District; the Tahoe Central Sierra region, managed by Stewardship West; and the five-County Central Sierra region, managed by the County of Tuolumne. The areas and entities represent a broad area of forested lands and communities with a diverse group of entities managing the grants that will provide the state with information on how different organizations can collaborate across counties to support innovative solutions to reduce feedstock barriers, increase feedstock aggregation, develop long-term feedstock contracts, and enhance economic development in rural communities.

Based on the action item identified by the Governor’s Forest Management Task Force, the urgency measures of Senate Bill 85, and the direction from the Joint Institute, the OPR is providing grants to the five (5) identified regions and entities for the required Pilot Projects. Each project will receive \$500,000. In support of forest restoration, community vegetation management, fire resilience and rural economic development, pilot projects will develop regional strategies to establish reliable access to woody feedstock through a variety of feedstock aggregation mechanisms and organizational innovations. The title of the NCRP project for the North Coast is the “Woody Feedstock Aggregation Pilot Project”

In its role as the Regional Contract Administrator for the NCRP, the administration of funds, such as those offered through this program, is the responsibility of the County of Humboldt, Public Works Natural Resources Planning Division. Staff is now requesting that the Board authorize the Humboldt

County Public Works Director, or a designee thereof, to accept and administer this funding to support implementation of the NCRP Woody Feedstock Aggregation Pilot Project and approve the associated supplemental budget.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Acceptance of the funding made available through the Woody Feedstock Aggregation Pilot Program will bring \$500,000 of state funding into the North Coast to support multi-year woody biomass utilization planning. The recommended supplemental budget for the 2021-2022 fiscal year will increase appropriations in Public Works budget unit 1720289 by \$500,000. Acceptance of the grant funds will not impact the Humboldt County General Fund.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:

The recommended actions support the Board of Supervisors Strategic Framework by creating opportunities for improved safety and health, engaging in discussions of our regional economic future, and building interjurisdictional and regional cooperation.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The North Coast Resource Partnership.

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Board of Supervisors may choose not to accept the funding made available through the Woody Feedstock Aggregation Pilot Program. However, this alternative is not recommended because of the proposed pilot project's benefit to forest restoration, community vegetation management, fire resilience, and rural economic development.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Supplemental Budget Request Regarding the Woody Feedstock Aggregation Pilot Project

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No.: N/A

Meeting of: N/A

File No.: N/A