

WHEREAS catastrophic wildfires continue to threaten lives, property and the natural resources of the state of California;

WHEREAS the Governor of California declared a drought emergency for the entire state, based on the occurrence of the driest year on record in California;

WHEREAS fire threat is no longer limited to a season, but ongoing throughout the year due to the multi-year drought, increasing suppression costs and wiping out of funds slated for fire prevention projects;

WHEREAS the elected and appointed officials of both the state and the nation have an obligation to preserve public safety and protect the citizenry and their homes and businesses by ensuring that the landscape is as fire-resilient as possible and that firefighting efforts can be effective and as safe as possible for fire fighters;

WHEREAS California is approximately 50% publicly owned land and many rural counties have substantially higher percentages of federally managed land;

WHEREAS <County name> has more than <number of acres> acres of federally managed land which is <percentage of federal land> % of the total land in the county;

WHEREAS the management of lands, particularly regarding fire protection and fuel reduction, on national forest system lands under the jurisdiction of the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service is wholly inadequate, has long-been ignored, and is significantly underfunded, placing <County name> in significant peril and at great risk in the event that catastrophic wildfires occur, thereby threatening lives, and destroying public resources, private property, businesses, and the natural environment;

WHEREAS <add square mileage or acreage> square miles/acres of <County name> have been destroyed by catastrophic wildfire over the last <number of years> years, destroying lives, property, businesses, and the environment;

WHEREAS California has more than 43 million acres of federal land, much of which has not been adequately managed to mitigate the risk of catastrophic wildfire;

WHEREAS 4 of the 5 largest wildfires in California in the past 100 years have been on federal land with the other having had a substantial federal component;

WHEREAS <add number of acres if possible or "many"> acres of dead and decaying trees remain in the national forests within <County name> due to lax forestry management practices on federal lands;

WHEREAS more than a billion dollars are spent each year fighting fires in our national forests;

WHEREAS the escalating costs of fighting fires on federal land over the last 10 years has significantly diminished the available resources for the critically needed prevention measures that can minimize these catastrophic fires;

WHEREAS, the U.S. Forest Service and Department of Interior have spent over \$1 billion on fire suppression every year since 2000 with suppression costs now consuming more than 50% of the total wildland fire budget, as compared to 13% of the total fire budget in 1991, leaving few resources for critically needed preventive maintenance of our national forests in the west and throughout the country;

WHEREAS the resources to manage the federal lands to reduce fire risk would be a small investment relative to the skyrocketing costs of fire suppression;

WHEREAS the increased risk of catastrophic wildfires in <County name> will result in harmful secondary environmental effects, including diminished air and water quality, impacted watershed, increased air pollutant emissions, and threatened habitats of sensitive wildlife species;

WHEREAS, approximately eighty percent of the State's developed surface water supply originates on watershed lands within our rural counties. California's residents use a portion of this water for domestic, commercial, agricultural, industrial, recreational, and other beneficial uses and these rivers, lakes, and watershed lands also serve as habitat for hundreds of species of fish and wildlife;

WHEREAS, the detrimental effects on these watersheds affect all of California, not just rural California;

WHEREAS the increased risk of catastrophic wildfires significantly impacts the levels of greenhouse gases in <County name> and throughout the state;

WHEREAS the mitigation of wildfire emissions is vital to reach the goals stated in the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32);

WHEREAS there continues to be a widely recognized extremely high risk of catastrophic wildfires in <County name> due to unnaturally heavy fuel loads and the early drying of wild land vegetation;

WHEREAS the <County name> Board of Supervisors calls for immediate measures to be taken to prevent imminent catastrophic wildfires;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the <County name> Board of Supervisors declares that there is an ongoing emergency due to the actual and perceived threat of wildfire in California, that the state and local governments have taken many steps to resolve this issue, and now urges the Governor to take an active role at the federal level to demand that the United States Forest Service take action in California's federal wild and forest lands to do the prevention and maintenance work required to mitigate the ongoing and increasing risk of catastrophic wildfires.