



# County of El Dorado

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## Legislation Text

File #: 12-1449, Version: 1

Sheriff's Office recommending the Board approve a budget transfer increasing revenues and appropriations in the Sheriff's Office in the amount of \$103,759 by transferring the funds from the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) Upper American River Project (UARP) Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) monies to continue law enforcement services on the Rubicon Trail during FY 2012/13. Funding will be used to offset additional salary, overtime, equipment and fixed asset costs for patrolling the Rubicon Trail, including the purchase of a new hard top for the patrol Jeep totaling approximately \$2,500.

### FUNDING: SMUD UARP Trust Fund Account.

<b>BUDGET SUMMARY:</b>	
Total Estimated Cost.....	\$152,641
Budgeted.....	\$48,882
New Funding.....	\$103,759
Savings.....	
Other.....	
Total Funding Available.....	\$152,641
Change To Net County Cost.....	\$0

### Fiscal Impact/Change to Net County Cost

No change to Net County Cost. SMUD Trust Fund monies in the amount of \$103,759 are being requested to offset total costs of \$152,641.00.

### Background

With thousands of miles of roads and trails, hundreds of square miles of public forestlands, and specifically the world famous Rubicon Trail, the El Dorado County Sheriff's Office (EDSO) has risen to a unique challenge not typically encountered by other law enforcement agencies. Patrolling this vast recreational resource requires a balance with the vigilant concern for protecting its beauty and splendor, while traversing the most remote and extreme terrain. EDSO does this to ensure safe recreation on the trail and to enforce the laws that govern its use, all the while, protecting our equipment from damage and officers from injury.

Since 2001, the EDSO has worked diligently at reducing the incidents of theft, disorderly conduct, violence, drunk driving, injury accidents, resource damage, and pollution. By the 2007 OHV season, when EDSO purchased a new patrol Jeep, there was a vast improvement in the atmosphere on the

trail. Word of EDSO's presence had obviously spread. There are fewer rogue party groups frequenting the area, resulting in fewer complaints, violations, and accidents. EDSO heard countless positive comments about their presence while on the trail, received a number of praising e-mails, and had a surprising number of appreciative remarks posted on a variety of off-road web sites. Many off-road enthusiasts, including clubs, families, and individuals, thanked EDSO deputies for their enforcement actions and assistance with returning the trail to the enjoyable state it once was.

The financial crisis in 2008 triggered funding cuts, resulting in reduced and sporadic patrols. Grant funding has been consistently reduced over the last several years. To compound things further, the Cleanup and Abatement Order issued in 2009 obligated EDSO to provide law enforcement services to realize compliance.

2012 marked the 10th full season of the Off Highway Vehicle Unit for the EDSO. This year deputies contacted over 6300 trail users and counted almost 2900 vehicles. Four Search and Rescues were conducted and several educational presentations were given. There were 234 warnings given for minor violations, one citation was issued, and no arrests were necessary. This is a testament to the effectiveness of our presence on the trail and the ongoing efforts by EDSO Deputies and State Parks Officers over the last several years. There were deputies and State Parks officers on the trail three days every weekend, each holiday, and during several special events. As a result of the 42-road closure in the El Dorado National Forest as imposed by the court, the Rubicon Trail saw increased activity from off road enthusiasts.

The recent county easement of the Rubicon Trail further obligates EDSO to provide law enforcement services to the area. EDSO has been fortunate to have the cooperative assistance of the California State Parks OHV Division by providing law enforcement officers to augment our program. Their presence is limited and is for the purpose of providing temporary support to the EDSO. To provide safe and effective law enforcement services to the Rubicon Trail requires a minimum of two properly equipped, well trained, and capable deputies through the summer months, as well as ongoing maintenance and repair to the patrol vehicle. This is due to the remote location of the trail, the extreme terrain limiting vehicular traffic to specialized off-road vehicles, and the fact that there is no backup available for the officers.

Last summer the Rubicon Trail Deputy stayed in the Rubicon Trail area during his work days to be more effective and available for immediate response to calls for service on the trail, day and night.

### **Fiscal Year (FY) 2012/13 FIRST QUARTER EXPENSES**

The OHV grant for FY 2012/13 was for \$36,661 from State Parks, with a \$12,221 county match funded with Green Sticker In-Lieu dollars, for a total project of \$48,882. First quarter costs for a full-time deputy with vehicle maintenance and fuel totaled approximately \$68,725 (\$63,692 personnel and \$5,033 fuel and repairs). Two significant incidents on the trail and two holidays this quarter required additional overtime. The grant money was depleted during the first quarter of operation, leaving a deficit of \$19,843 going into the second quarter. This was not unexpected as we planned a patrol program based on the availability of the UARP SMUD funds.

### **2012/13 FOURTH QUARTER COST PROJECTION Personnel Needs**

The Law Enforcement Staffing Plan for 2013 is as follows: EDSO will have two deputies based out of Spider Lake. State Parks will have two rangers based out of Rubicon Springs. EDSO will work from the Loon Lake kiosk to Buck Island and State Parks will work from Buck Island to the trail head in Tahoma. This will enable State Parks to patrol the trail located in Placer County, while still being able to provide assistance to EDSO.

**Fuel, Parts, Maintenance, Repairs, Safety Equipment**

The terrain is extremely demanding of the equipment and requires frequent maintenance and repairs on the Jeep. The area patrolled is also very remote and no tow services are available. Although the Jeep is highly modified and upgraded to avoid breakage, damage and breakdown is inevitable. Common items to fail are steering components, axles, transmission and transfer case, tires, springs, control arms, and other suspension components. One major repair can be thousands of dollars.

The hardtop is cracked in several places and now leaks in the winter, requiring replacement. There is minor body damage accumulated over the last five years of use that needs repair and striping. Law enforcement safety equipment is needed to outfit the two deputies using Load Bearing Tactical Vests rather than duty belts due to the restricted confines of the Jeep's interior. One tire is in need of immediate replacement and a spare tire needs to be kept in the shop for ready access. Approximately 500 gallons of fuel is estimated to be consumed before June 30, 2013.

Small tools and supplies needed are items such as replacement of broken tools, air hose and tire chuck, tie-downs and straps, safety gloves, fire extinguisher replacement, torque wrench, electrical tools, recovery tools, straps, clevis hooks, etc. New fuel cans need to be purchased and mounted securely. A small chainsaw needs to be purchased and mounted securely. The steel winch line poses significant risk of injury to the deputy during recovery operations and needs to be replaced with synthetic line and a protective cover.

A satellite phone must be purchased due to the lack of cellular phone access on the trail and limited use of radio to relay confidential, investigatory, and tactical information.

Two existing quads need to be serviced and made ready for deployment in the event of emergencies or special events.

The fourth quarter expense projection for two full-time deputies, including personnel costs, fuel, replacement parts, tires, maintenance, repairs, safety equipment, small tools & supplies, and to repair two quads for emergency response is \$83,916.

Personnel:	\$66,816
Safety Equipment:	3,900
Fuel, Parts, Maint, Repairs	<u>13,200</u>
Total 4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr. Projection	\$83,916

**UARP SMUD Fund Budget Transfer Request:**

1st Quarter Deficit	\$ 19,843
4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr Projection	<u>83,916</u>
Transfer Request	\$ 103,759

**Reason for Recommendation**

Approval of this recommendation will allow EDSO to continue to provide adequate law enforcement services on the Rubicon Trail for the remainder of FY 2012/13.

**Action(s) to be taken following Board approval**

After Board Chair signs the Budget Transfer, the SMUD Trust Fund, the revenues and appropriations will be transferred to Sheriff's FY 2012/13 OHV budget. EDSO will submit expense reports to draw down actual funding from the trust account.

**Contact**

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