



Legislation Text

File #: 18-0153, **Version:** 1

Supervisor Ranalli recommending the Board consider the following:

- 1) Authorize the chair to sign California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) Local Assistance for Tree Mortality Grant Application Fiscal Year 2017/18 Funding Opportunity that would provide approximately \$393,892 in funding for tree mortality operations for government organizations in El Dorado County, which were approved by the Governor's Office of Emergency Services for California Disaster Assistance Act funds, for the purpose of identifying, removing and disposing of dead and dying trees that pose a threat to public health and safety; and
- 2) Approve the distribution of the \$393,892 in CAL FIRE funds to the following organizations at the following amounts:
 - a) El Dorado County - \$306,175
 - b) Grizzly Flats Community Services District - \$82,717
 - c) City of Placerville - \$5,000
- 3) Authorize the chair to sign letter addressed to California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) that identifies the Board's approved distribution of the \$393,892 in CAL FIRE Local Assistance for Tree Mortality grant funds. (Est. Time: 10 Min.)

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION:

- 1) Authorize the chair to sign California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) Local Assistance for Tree Mortality Grant Application Fiscal Year 2017-18 Funding Opportunity that would provide approximately \$393,892 in funding for tree mortality operations for government organizations in El Dorado County, which were approved by the Governor's Office of Emergency Services for California Disaster Assistance Act funds, for the purpose of identifying, removing and disposing of dead and dying trees that pose a threat to public health and safety;
- 2) Approve the distribution of the \$393,892 in CAL FIRE funds to the following organizations at the following amounts:
 - a) El Dorado County - \$306,175
 - b) Grizzly Flats Community Services District - \$82,717
 - c) City of Placerville - \$5,000

The allocation of funds between El Dorado County, Grizzly Flats Community Services District and the City of Placerville was done by the following criteria:

- 1) Each organization has been approved for California Disaster Assistance Act funds and has cut down trees through the program.
- 2) How many trees have been cut down or about to be cut down through the program to date (e.g. tree that have been cut down or trees have been marked and right of entry documents)

have been signed)

DISCUSSION / BACKGROUND:

The 2017-18 Local Assistance for Tree Mortality (LATM) Grant Program funding is authorized by the Legislature in SB 108 and administered by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). The 2017-18 LATM Grant Program is a one-time appropriation of \$6 million for grants to local agencies in the 10 high priority counties participating in the Tree Mortality Task Force (TMTF) for the purposes of identifying, removing and disposing of dead and dying trees that pose a threat to public health and safety. EL Dorado County has been allocated \$393,892 of the \$6 million.

The objective of the LATM Grant Program is to increase the pace and scale of tree mortality projects by providing up to 25% reimbursement for eligible costs in high priority counties that are 1) consistent with the requirements for tree mortality projects through the California Disaster Assistance Act (CDAA), and 2) consistent with the local CAL FIRE Unit Fire Plan.

The governing body (Board of Supervisors or County Administrator) of the high priority county may, at their discretion, provide a portion of their total grant allocation to another CDAA-eligible local agency with jurisdictional authority for hazard tree removal by expressly identifying the local agency and amount of funding to be made available in a signed letter to CAL FIRE during the application process.

Background Information on Tree Mortality

On October 30, 2015, Governor Brown proclaimed a State of Emergency due to unprecedented tree mortality caused by conditions of extreme drought and drought-related bark beetle infestations. The Governor's Emergency Proclamation contains 18 distinct actions that direct state agencies, utilities and local governments to remove dead or dying trees in high hazard areas across the entire State of California.

On March 28, 2016, the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors declared a state of emergency due to pervasive tree mortality in El Dorado County.

Data collected by State and federal agencies demonstrates that drought conditions and bark beetle infestation have killed over 102 million trees in the State of California, and that tens of millions more are likely to die over the next five to six years. Surveys conducted by the U.S. Forest Service in May estimate that new tree mortality (between October 2015 and May 2016) in El Dorado County has affected an estimated 512,000 conifer trees. Many of these trees are located in the Eldorado National Forest or on private land. However, some of these trees endanger County infrastructure (e.g., County roads and County buildings). In comparison, counties to the south of El Dorado County have had the following estimated number of dead conifer trees (between October 2015 and May 2016):

Tulare County - 8,100,000

Madera County - 3,800,000

Mariposa County - 3,200,000

Tuolumne County - 2,500,000

Kern County - 2,200,000

Acting alone, El Dorado County lacks the capacity and resources to address this expanding emergency that threatens County infrastructure. The Board's adoption of Resolution 053-2016 on March 28, 2016 enabled the County to start the process to seek State and possibly Federal funding and demonstrated the County's intent to partner with State, Federal, and local agencies and with private partners in order to immediately and effectively address tree mortality throughout the County.

On May 17, 2016, the Board of Supervisors approved the County's Tree Mortality Hazard Tree Removal Plan and allowed for the process of assessing the amount of dead trees that are threatening County maintained road infrastructure by transferring funds to the Community Development Agency to complete the count. The Facilities Division completed a dead tree count on County property that threatens County infrastructure.

Through the tree count, at the time, the County estimated that it had approximately 3,100 trees to remove that threaten county infrastructure (e.g., County roads or County buildings). Of the 3,100 trees that need removal, approximately 2,800 are threatening County roads and 300 are threatening County buildings and other infrastructure. These numbers are just estimates of the number of dead and diseased trees to be removed due to the threat to County-owned infrastructure. The number of dead and diseased trees has increased over the summer and fall and new tree count numbers will be available soon. It is important to note that trees marked for actual removal under California Disaster Assistance Act (CDAA) funding must be verified by Registered Professional Foresters (RPFs) or Certified Arborists.

On August 2, 2016 (agenda item 33), the Board of Supervisors authorized the Chair to sign the CDAA application and authorized the submittal of the application for funding related to the State's declared Tree Mortality emergency.

On September 2, 2016, the El Dorado County Sheriff's Department was notified by the Governor's Office of Emergency Services that the County was approved for CDAA funding.

On, September 8, 2016, the Procurement and Contracts Division, on behalf of the Chief Administrative Office, released Request for Proposal (RFP) No. 17-918-009, soliciting responses for tree mortality coordination services. Three responses were received which met the requirements of the RFP. The three responses were reviewed by a panel of four evaluators. Members of the panel represented the Health and Human Services Agency, Community Development Agency, Chief Administrative Office, and the Office of District Four Supervisor Michael Ranalli. A consensus meeting was convened which identified Black Fox Management Group Inc. as the highest scoring proposal, scoring 397 out of a possible 448 points. The proposals not selected scored 297, and 332 out of a possible 448.

Since being under contract, Black Fox has worked with County staff to begin the public outreach process, confirm the eligibility of trees to be removed using CDAA funding, created scopes of work and cost estimates for tree removal contracts, and inspected the work performed by tree removal firms. Tree removal work has been underway in the Camino, Grizzly Flats, and Happy Valley areas. With the new funding, new projects will be identified soon and be brought to the Board for action this winter and spring before the next fire season.

ALTERNATIVES:

If the Board chooses not approve to send the application to CAL FIRE, El Dorado County will lose the ability to obtain \$392,892 in funds without a County match.

OTHER DEPARTMENT / AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

Chief Administrative Office, County Counsel, and Risk Management.

CAO RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board approve this item.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There is a future Net County Cost for future

CLERK OF THE BOARD FOLLOW UP ACTIONS

1) Clerk of the Board will obtain signature of Board Chair on the application and then contact Creighton Avila in the Chief Administrative Office.

STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENT:

Public Safety and Infrastructure.

CONTACT

Supervisor Michael Ranalli