



County of El Dorado

330 Fair Lane, Building A
Placerville, California
530 621-5390
FAX 622-3645
www.edcgov.us/bos/

Legislation Text

File #: 14-0773, Version: 1

Community Development Agency and Human Resources recommending the Board approve and authorize the Chair to sign Resolution **055-2014** amending the Authorized Personnel Allocation Resolution for the Community Development Agency to add two 2.0 Full Time Equivalent Limited Term Vector Control Technician II allocations to address the staffing needs of the vector control program in South Lake Tahoe, which are necessary to adequately meet the operational needs of the department.

BUDGET SUMMARY:	
Total Estimated Cost.....	\$90,000
Budget - Current FY.....	\$200,000
Budget - Future FY.....	\$150,000
New Funding.....	
Savings.....	
Other.....	
Total Funding Available.....	
Change To Net County Cost.....	\$-0-

Fiscal Impact/Change to Net County Cost

The South Lake Tahoe vector control program is funded by ad valorem taxes and special tax assessments on improved property in County Service Area #3 (CSA #3). The program's proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2014-15 includes \$150,000 for extra help employees. The cost of converting two of the extra help positions to limited term appointments is approximately \$90,000, which would be funded by a commensurate decrease in the use of temporary staffing.

For the current fiscal year, the CSA #3 budget has sufficient remaining balance to fund the proposed positions.

Background

In 2011, the Vector Control Technician classification in South Lake Tahoe was changed from a permanent classification to an extra help classification. Previously, the Vector Control Technicians were used for vector control during the summer season and for snow removal at County facilities in South Lake Tahoe during the winter months. Analysis of overtime pay, standby pay, and actual time spent on snow removal resulted in the determination that it is more cost effective and efficient to move snow removal duties to the Department of Transportation, which already provided snow removal to county roads. Without snow removal duties, the Vector Control Technicians now work only during the warmer months of the year and focus their efforts on the control of mosquitos, plague, Hantavirus, and yellow jackets.

With this modification in staff classification, the Community Development Agency Environmental Management Division (EMD) was able to increase the number of Vector Control Technicians during the spring through fall from three to six. Since this change, the numbers of mosquito complaints have decreased significantly and EMD staff has not had to fog for adult mosquitos since 2011.

Reason for Recommendation

The technicians in the Lake Tahoe Basin generally work from early spring through mid-November, and typically exceed 1,000 hours of work during the fiscal year. The County's Personnel Rules were recently updated on May 7, 2013 (Resolution 048-2013) and now limit recurrent extra help employees to no more than 1,000 hours each fiscal year. This restriction results in EMD having limited or no experienced staff toward the end of the fiscal year (spring), when treating larval mosquitos is needed most to avoid them hatching into biting adults.

Further, the State of California Department of Public Health (CDPH) requires that Vector Control Technicians obtain certification as a "Certified Technician" if they are applying pesticide. These requirements in the California Health and Safety Code Section 106925 state that "...every governmental agency employee who handles, applies, or supervises the use of any pesticide for public health purposes to be certified by CDPH as a Vector Control Technician in at least one relevant vector control category commensurate with the technician's assigned duties."

In order to obtain this certification, employees must be actively working for a vector agency, such as the County. In addition, employees must complete 12 units of continuing education units (CEUs) within the "Pesticide Use and Safety" category, and 8 additional units for each specialty certification, every two years for their certifications to remain active. It is uncommon to find an abundance of temporary workers who possess the required active certifications to be employed as Vector Control Technicians.

There are exemptions from obtaining certifications, as stated in California Code of Regulations Section 30013: "Under the Direct Supervision of" means the act or process whereby a pesticide is applied by a Certified Technician (Limited) or a Vector Control Aide acting under the instructions and control of a Certified Technician who is responsible for the actions of that person and who is available if and when needed even though such certified technician is not physically present at the time the pesticide is applied. A Certified Technician shall be physically present during the application of a pesticide when required by the pesticide label." In the County, Vector Control Technician I's are the only class to which this exemption applies. As such, the County would continue to employ extra help staff in the Vector Control Technician I classification. Since lead staff must be available to this entry-level class, it is imperative to have more senior, experienced Vector Control Technician II employees available throughout the entire season.

In addition to certification, the Vector Control Technicians know precisely where each treatment area is located. Most of these treatment areas are remote and the staff learn the locations after visiting them multiple times with other knowledgeable staff. Currently, EMD has identified over 900 locations within the County that may require treatment. Additionally, each location has unique characteristics that require variations in treatment type, such as pesticide use and technique. The extra help classification is not well-suited to retaining the knowledge and skill set required of the senior staff members to address vector control effectively.

EMD recommends the Board of Supervisors allocate two Limited Term Vector Control Technician II positions for the CSA #3 vector control program to allow senior staff to be available for the entire season without limitations on hours worked within a fiscal year, and allow the County to recruit and retain qualified candidates to ensure the success of the program. Human Resources is currently working with union representatives to make the necessary modifications to the Personnel Rules.

Clerk of the Board Follow Up Actions

Clerk of the Board to provide CDA and HR each with one (1) copy of the resolution signed by the Chair.

Contact

Gerri Silva
Environmental Management Division Director