



**MEMORANDUM
OFFICE OF THE
COUNTY EXECUTIVE OFFICER
COUNTY OF PLACER**

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors

FROM: David Boesch, County Executive Officer
By: Brett Storey, Senior Management Analyst

DATE: August 18, 2015

**SUBJECT: 2015 FUEL REDUCTION MANAGEMENT PROGRAM FUNDING
RECOMMENDATIONS**

ACTION REQUESTED

Approve funding recommendations for the Fuel Reduction Management Program which funds activities that support a reduction in potential fires in the Middle Fork Project nexus area, and authorize the County Executive Officer to negotiate and sign funding agreements with the City of Auburn Fire Department in an amount not to exceed \$35,700. Funding for these requests is available pursuant to the Middle Fork Project (MFP) Memorandum of Agreement with Placer County Water Agency, at no cost to the County.

BACKGROUND

At the June 3, 2014 Board of Supervisors meeting, your Board approved the Fuel Reduction Management (FRM) Program. The FRM program awards available funds to projects that perform fuel management activities supporting a reduction in potential fires in the MFP nexus area. This area is a critical forested watershed and protection of it is of paramount importance. The FRM program allows for the funding application period to be twice annually - in January and June each year. This allows participating organizations the opportunity to obtain the required contributing funds consistent with grant guidelines.

The MFP is a multi-purpose water supply and hydro-generation project designed to conserve and control waters of the Middle Fork American River, the Rubicon River, and several associated tributary streams. Beginning in 2014, and for the duration of the federal license for the MFP, an annual amount of funds will be made available to organizations that propose projects or have programs that 1) have a direct nexus to the project area and 2) show the potential to reduce fire danger through some form of fuel management projects. Staff had estimated available funds at \$150,000 for 2015 to dedicate to this program.

RECOMMENDATION FUNDING SUMMARY

The following two projects have been found to meet all of the FRM criteria and directly support the MFP area for fuel reduction and are recommended for funding by staff for the second phase of the 2015 program:

- 1) City of Auburn Fire Department: \$30,750 for MFP portion of American River Canyon Shaded Fuel Break – Olive Orchard/Aeolia

- 2) City of Auburn Fire Department: \$4,950 for MFP portion of American River Canyon Shaded Fuel Break – Blackstone

The total recommended funding of the second phase for the FRM program projects for 2015 is \$35,700. The total including both phases of the FRM program for 2015 would be \$131,700.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no new net County cost associated with the recommended action. The funds related to MFP nexus “projects” are available in the Community and Agency Support appropriation as part of the approved FY 2015-16 Proposed Budget.

ATTACHMENT

Fuel Reduction Management Program Recommendations for 2015

cc: Holly Heinzen, Chief Assistant CEO
Rob Sandman, Deputy County Counsel

Fuel Reduction Management Program Recommendations for 2015

Background: The Placer County Board of Supervisors adopted the Fuel Reduction Management (FRM) Program in 2014 to implement a program that funds projects that perform fuel management activities that support a reduction in potential fire in the Middle Fork Project (MFP) nexus area. The funding available is pursuant to the Middle Fork Project Memorandum of Agreement with Placer County Water Agency and based upon a nexus to the MFP area.

Process: The BOS Adopted FRM program allows for the application period to be twice annually; once in January and one in June. Two applications were received by one organization and were reviewed by a joint County/PCWA staff panel and the following recommendations for projects have been proposed.

Individual Projects Recommendations: The following projects were reviewed by staff to meet all FRM program qualifications and are recommended for funding in the FRM Program. Staff is recommending a total of \$35,700 in funding to the Placer County Board of Supervisors.

Project Recommendation #1

Title: American River Canyon Shaded Fuel Break – Olive Orchard/Aeolia

Applicant: City of Auburn Fire Department

County Plan project references: 1) Western Slope Placer County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP), 2) DMA 2000 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (FEMA approved), and 3) Greater Auburn Area Fire Safe Council Strategic Plan.

Total Project Cost: \$160,415

Application agency contribution: \$129,665

Request of funds: \$30,750

Recommendation of funds: \$30,750 (19% of total project – 40 % is maximum)

Summary of Project: The objective of the Olive Orchard/Aeolia area project (part of the overall 110 acre American River Canyon Shaded Fuel Break) is to provide a means of protection to the Auburn community from the disaster of wildfire, preserve natural and cultural resources, enhance the watershed, support wildlife habitat, and maintain recreational opportunities to the pristine American River and Auburn State Recreation Area.

The Shaded Fuel Break is a carefully planned thinning of dense vegetation so that wildfire does not easily move from the ground into the overhead tree canopy where fire intensifies and spreads rapidly. The intent of the Shaded Fuel Break is to provide protection by reducing flammable fuels consumed in a wildfire to lessen fire intensity and to allow fire suppression resources the ability to achieve the highest probable success in mitigating such a wildfire. The project area will encompass approximately 10 acres where treatment will be applied.

Vegetation will be removed by hand; using handsaws, pole saws, and chainsaws. Cut materials will be hauled, stacked in piles, and chipped with a mechanical chipper. Chipped materials will be scattered within the project area and left on site for natural decomposition and soil stability

enhancement. By reducing the vegetation in drainages fire suppression may be more effective, watersheds may experience less destruction from wildfire, and less vegetation generally will add water to the natural system. In this, case the American River. Other contributory funding will be utilized from the California Conservation Corps, the Placer land Trust, the City of Auburn Fire Department and the Aeolia Heights Homeowner Association.

Project Recommendation #2

Title: American River Canyon Shaded Fuel Break – Blackstone

Applicant: City of Auburn Fire Department

County Plan project references: 1) Western Slope Placer County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP), 2) DMA 2000 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (FEMA approved), and 3) Greater Auburn Area Fire Safe Council Strategic Plan.

Total Project Cost: \$104,950

Application agency contribution: \$100,000

Request of funds: \$4,950

Recommendation of funds: \$4,950 (5% of total project – 40 % is maximum)

Summary of Project: The objective of the Blackstone area project (part of the overall 110 acre American River Canyon Shaded Fuel Break) is to provide a means of protection to the Auburn community from the disaster of wildfire, preserve natural and cultural resources, enhance the watershed, support wildlife habitat, and maintain recreational opportunities to the pristine American River and Auburn State Recreation Area.

The Shaded Fuel Break is a carefully planned thinning of dense vegetation so that wildfire does not easily move from the ground into the overhead tree canopy where fire intensifies and spreads rapidly. The intent of the Shaded Fuel Break is to provide protection by reducing flammable fuels consumed in a wildfire to lessen fire intensity and to allow fire suppression resources the ability to achieve the highest probable success in mitigating such a wildfire. The project area will encompass approximately 5 to 7 acres where treatment will be applied. Vegetation will be removed by hand; using handsaws, pole saws, and chainsaws. Cut materials will be hauled, stacked in piles, and chipped with a mechanical chipper. Chipped materials will be scattered within the project area and left on site for natural decomposition and soil stability enhancement. By reducing the vegetation in drainages fire suppression may be more effective, watersheds may experience less destruction from wildfire, and less vegetation generally will add water to the natural system. In this, case the American River. Other contributory funding will be utilized from the California Conservation Corps, and the City of Auburn Fire Department.

Individual Projects declined: There were no applications declined during this second phase of 2015.