



M E M O R A N D U M
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING DIVISION
 County of Placer

TO: Board of Supervisors DATE: April 27, 2021
 FROM: Ken Grehm, Director of Public Works
 By: Brett Storey, Principal Management Analyst
 SUBJECT: Task Agreement Approval / The Nature Conservancy / French Meadows Forest Restoration Project

ACTION REQUESTED

Approve Task Agreement Number 4 with The Nature Conservancy, in substantial conformance with the draft agreement on file, to receive up to \$1,563,488 in grant funding to support the French Meadows Forest Restoration Project, and authorize the County Executive Officer, or designee, to sign the Agreement as well as any amendments to this grant agreement.

BACKGROUND

On June 11, 2019, your Board approved a Cooperative Agreement with The Nature Conservancy (TNC), which allows TNC to provide grant funding from a variety of sources for Placer County’s implementation of the French Meadows Forest Restoration Project (Project). The Cooperative Agreement expires February 15, 2022. Task Agreement number 4 is the fourth agreement to be implemented by both parties and will cover work to be completed through December 31, 2021.

Modification Number 5 to the Supplemental Project Agreement (SPA) with the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) Tahoe National Forest (TNF) to the previously approved Master Stewardship Agreement (MSA) for the Project, which provides authority to perform mechanical forest thinning operations, mastication of smaller trees, and the removal of material for biomass within a 22,000 acre region that surrounds French Meadows Reservoir and is a part of the Middle Fork Project (MFP) operational area. This authorized work is consistent with the work identified in the TNC Task Agreement.

Specifically, these grant funds from TNC can be used for mechanical thinning, mastication and hand thinning work of the Project, conducted by others, during 2021. This funding is available, on a reimbursable basis, to use during the 2021 operational season from the following sources:

Private sources	\$263,488
Cal Fire	\$1,300,000
Total	\$1,563,488

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The action requested today does not constitute a "Project" under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines 15378(b)(5) because it is an administrative action that does not result in any direct or physical change in the environment.

The underlying work has already complied with required environmental review. Two Notices Of Exemption (NOE) were filed for this Project: 1) The work being authorized by this Task Agreement is consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15308 (Class 8 CEQA Categorical Exemption: Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of the Environment) because it is an action authorized by the Placer County Grading Ordinance that will help assure the maintenance, restoration, enhancement, or protection of the environment, and the regulatory process involves procedures for

protection of the environment. This exemption was filed on December 21, 2018; and 2) The work being authorized by this Task Agreement is consistent with Senate Bill (SB) 901. SB 901 provides that until January 1, 2023, CEQA would not apply to prescribed fire, thinning, or fuel reduction projects undertaken on federal lands to reduce the risk of high-severity wildfire that have been reviewed under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). This exemption was filed on January 24, 2019. The NEPA Decision Notice for the French Meadows Restoration Project was signed by the TNF Forest Supervisor on December 12, 2018.

FISCAL IMPACT

Access to the \$1,563,488 TNC grant funds is available on a reimbursable basis to use during the 2021 implementation season. The grant funding for MFP nexus projects is budgeted in the Community and Agency Support appropriation in the adopted FY 21/22 budget.

ATTACHMENTS

None

On File with Clerk of the Board: Task Agreement Number 4 with The Nature Conservancy