

**PLACER COUNTY  
OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES**

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Honorable Board of Supervisors

**FROM:**  Thomas M. Miller, County Executive Officer  
by Brett Storey, Senior Management Analyst

**DATE:** March 25, 2008

**SUBJECT:** *Adopting the Community Wildfire Protection Plan for the West Slope of the Sierra Nevada in Placer County*

---

**ACTION REQUESTED**

Adopt the attached resolution approving the *Community Wildfire Protection Plan for the West Slope of the Sierra Nevada in Placer County*, and authorize the Chairman of the Board to sign the signature page signifying agreement with the plan that supports a prioritized process for securing funding based on rigorously determined and documented risks and benefits.

**BACKGROUND**

On September 27, 2005 the Board authorized the Office of Emergency Services (OES) to complete a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) for the west slope of the Sierra Nevada planning area. This area encompasses three separate Fire Safe Councils (FSC):

- 1) Iowa Hill/Foresthill FSC Planning Area
- 2) Placer Sierra FSC Planning Area (includes City of Colfax, and areas covered by Weimar-Applegate-Colfax Area Municipal Advisory Council and Meadow Vista Municipal Advisory Council)
- 3) Greater Auburn FSC Planning Area (includes the City of Auburn, and the areas comprising North Auburn/Ophir Fire, Bowman and Christian Valley)

A contract was awarded to Steve Holl Consulting in May 2006 to develop this CWPP for Placer County. Holl, representing Placer County, met with the pertinent fire chiefs in order to identify specific fire prevention projects identified in the Placer County Local Hazardous Mitigation Plan and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) Nevada-Yuba-Placer Ranger Unit 2004 Fire Plan as updated with additional projects in 2006. A second review was completed in August 2007. The plan was then distributed in November 2007 to the fire chiefs and Fire Safe Council Chairs for comment and project prioritization. Public Comment meetings were noticed in the Auburn Journal and posted in January 2008. Public meetings were held in Foresthill on January 15, Colfax on January 24, Auburn City and the Fire Alliance on January 28, 2008. All public comment has been reviewed and incorporated where appropriate.

Based upon CAL FIRE provided estimates, there is now a 63% chance of a large (3,200 acres+) fire occurring in any given year on the west slope of the Sierra Nevada in Placer County. As an example of how easily the projected average can be exceeded, the Ralston Fire in September 2006 in the Tahoe National Forest near Foresthill burned 8,398 acres at a cost of \$11,600,000 to control and extinguish.

**Purpose of the CWPP**

The CWPP is a collaborative effort between the Board of Supervisors, CAL FIRE, and local fire protection districts. The CWPP defines specific fire hazards in a designated planning area, assesses the risks posed by these hazards and identifies/prioritizes specific mitigation projects to protect local communities. Projects include, among other things, rehabilitation and restoration of habitat, hazardous fuels reduction, and public education.

The completion of a CWPP for the West Slope of the Sierra Nevada is essential to gaining access to private non-profit, federal and state grant funds such as distributed under the Federal Healthy Forest Initiative and from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy. As funding priorities are provided to communities with a completed CWPP, Placer County encourages and supports individual FSC in order for them to obtain grants to execute prioritized projects over time.

**The Plan**

The *Community Wildfire Protection Plan for the West Slope of the Sierra Nevada in Placer County* meets or exceeds federal and state requirements for a community-based plan. The plan discusses the many challenges in the planning areas and community preparedness, provides great amount of detail in hazard assessment, and lists 36 prioritized defense zones or urban lot fuel reduction projects totaling 3,245 acres. The estimated cost of \$4.66 million covers projects identified for the current five year planning period.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no impact to the general fund as a result of this action. County OES will use this plan to prioritize future federal and state fuel reduction funding.

**Attachments**

Resolution

Community Wildfire Protection Plan for the Western Slope of the Sierra Nevada in Placer County – **on file with Clerk of the Board for public review.**

# Before the Board of Supervisors County of Placer, State of California

In the matter of:

Resol. No: \_\_\_\_\_

**A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE COMMUNITY  
WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN FOR  
THE WEST SLOPE OF THE SIERRA NEVADA IN  
PLACER COUNTY**

The following **RESOLUTION** was duly passed by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Placer at a regular meeting held **MARCH 25, 2008** by the following vote on roll call:

Ayes:

Noes:

Absent:

Signed and approved by me after its passage.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman, Board of Supervisors

**Attest:**

**Clerk of said Board** \_\_\_\_\_

**WHEREAS** Placer County recognizes the threat that catastrophic wildfires pose and that undertaking fire mitigation actions will reduce the potential for harm to people and property from future wildfire occurrences within our communities; and

**WHEREAS** Placer County participated fully in the mitigation planning process with multiple fire districts and fire safe councils to prepare this Community Wildfire Protection Plan; and

**WHEREAS** each specific project within the plan will be detailed and funding located prior to implementation; and

**WHEREAS** adopting the *Community Wildfire Protection Plan for the West Slope of the Sierra Nevada in Placer County* is a best practice for acquiring future funding for mitigation projects under multiple federal, state and private grant programs.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Governing Body of the County of Placer that the *Community Wildfire Protection Plan for the Western Slope of the Sierra Nevada in Placer County* is hereby adopted as an official plan.

