



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: July 08, 2014

SUBJECT: Fuel Reduction Management Program Funding Recommendations for 2014

ACTION REQUESTED

Approve staff funding recommendations related to the Fuel Reduction Management Program and authorize the County Executive to negotiate and sign funding agreements with recommended agencies in an amount not to exceed \$129,460. Funding for these requests is available pursuant to the Middle Fork Project (MFP) Memorandum of Agreement with Placer County Water Agency, at no net County cost.

BACKGROUND

At the June 3, 2014 Board of Supervisors meeting, your Board approved the Fuel Reduction Management (FRM) Program. The FRM program will award available funds to projects that perform fuel management activities supporting a reduction in potential fire in the MFP nexus area. This area is a critical forested watershed and protection of it is of paramount importance.

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 requested to be able to fund projects to a not to exceed total of \$150,000 for 2014.

RECOMMENDATION FUNDING SUMMARY

The following five 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 this program during 2014;

- 1) City of Auburn Fire Department; \$21,000 for MFP portion of American River Canyon shaded fuel break -Mariana Drainage Project

- 2) City of Auburn Fire Department; \$11,000 for MFP portion of American River Canyon shaded fuel break -Tamaroo Drainage Project
- 3) Foresthill/Iowa Hill Firesafe Council: \$45,000 for MFP portion of Baltimore Mine I Fuel Break
- 4) Foresthill/Iowa Hill Firesafe Council: \$45,000 for MFP portion of Baltimore Mine II Fuel Break
- 5) Placer County Resource Conservation District: \$7,460 for MFP portion of Foresthill Biomass Feasibility Study

The total recommended funding for FRM program projects for 2014 is \$129,460. Remaining unallocated funds will remain in the account and be made available for future funding requests.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no net County cost associated with the action requested. The funds related to MFP nexus "projects" are available in the Community and Agency Support appropriation as part of the recently approved FY 2014-15 Proposed Budget.

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

ATTACHMENT

Fuel Reduction Management Program Recommendations for 2014



Middle Fork Project Area Fuel Reduction Program

Fuel Reduction Management Program Recommendations for 2014

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. In 2014 the FRM program was not adopted until May therefore only one application period in June was conducted. Five applications were received by three separate organizations 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 \$129,460 in funding to the Placer County Board of Supervisors.

Project Recommendation #1

Title: American River Canyon shaded fuel break -Mariana Drainage Project

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)

Total Project Cost: \$59,500

Application agency contribution: \$38,500

Request of funds: \$21,000

Recommendation of funds: \$21,000



Middle Fork Project Area Fuel Reduction Program

Summary of Project: The objective of the Mariana Drainage area project (part of the overall 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 4 to 5 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.

Project Recommendation #2

Title: American River Canyon shaded fuel break -Tamaroo Drainage Project

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)

Total Project Cost: \$45,000

Application agency contribution: \$ 34,000

Request of funds: \$11,000

Recommendation of funds: \$11,000

Summary of Project: The objective of the Tamaroo Drainage area project (part of the overall 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



Middle Fork Project Area Fuel Reduction Program

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 4 to 5 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.

Project Recommendation #3

Title: Baltimore Mine I Fuel Break

Applicant: Foresthill/Iowa Hill Firesafe Council

County Plan project references: 1) Western Slope Placer County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP), 2) DMA 2000 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (FEMA approved)

Total Project Cost: \$112,500

Application agency contribution: \$67,500

Request of funds: \$49,500

Recommendation of funds: \$45,000 (maximum amount 40% of total project)

Summary of Project: This project (first section Baltimore Mine Fuel Break) will construct a modified shaded fuel break: a defensible location to be used by fire suppression resources in the control of oncoming wildfires and prevent wildfire spread by removing hazardous fuels in a tactical area just below the historical town of Foresthill. The shaded fuel break, approximately 35 acres will be constructed on private lands adjacent to Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) lands, U.S. Forest Service Tahoe National Forest (USFS) lands and the PCWA Middle Fork Project area.. The owners of this property have strived to be fire-wise



Middle Fork Project Area Fuel Reduction Program

and have continually brushed their property as much as possible. This has been accomplished through private dollars, grants from NRCS and grants acquired from the Foresthill/Iowa Hill FSC through the California Firesafe Council Clearinghouse from BLM. Property valued at greater than \$853 million dollars will be protected once this fuel break is completed. Fire Safe and defensible space information will be distributed to over 7,000 residents in these communities. The project will demonstrate landscape scale community protection in our area, including publication and presentation of methods and results.

Project Recommendation #4

Title: Baltimore Mine II Fuel Break

Applicant: Foresthill/Iowa Hill Firesafe Council

County Plan project references:

Total Project Cost: \$112,500

Application agency contribution: \$67,500

Request of funds: \$49,500

Recommendation of funds: \$45,000 (maximum amount 40% of total project)

Summary of Project: This project (second section Baltimore Mine Fuel Break) will construct a modified shaded fuel break: a defensible location to be used by fire suppression resources in the control of oncoming wildfires and prevent wildfire spread by removing hazardous fuels in a tactical area just below the historical town of Foresthill. The shaded fuel break, approximately 35 acres will be constructed on private lands adjacent to Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) lands, U.S. Forest Service Tahoe National Forest (USFS) lands and the PCWA Middle Fork Project area.. The owners of this property have strived to be fire-wise and have continually brushed their property as much as possible. This has been accomplished through private dollars, grants from NRCS and grants acquired from the Foresthill/Iowa Hill FSC through the California Firesafe Council Clearinghouse from BLM. Property valued at greater than \$853 million dollars will be protected once this fuel break is completed. Fire Safe and defensible space information will be distributed to over 7,000 residents in these communities. The project will demonstrate landscape scale community protection in our area, including publication and presentation of methods and results.



Middle Fork Project Area Fuel Reduction Program

Project Recommendation #5

Title: Foresthill Biomass Feasibility Study

Applicant: Placer County Resource Conservation District

County Plan project references: Strategic Plan for the Wildfire Protection and Biomass Utilization Program

Total Project Cost: \$77,460

Application agency contribution: \$70,000

Request of funds: \$7,460

Recommendation of funds: \$7,460

Summary of Project: A Foresthill Biomass Utilization Feasibility Study is being funded by the Placer County Air Pollution Control District to look at a first step to achieve multiple goals on the Foresthill Divide, including improved air quality, local job creation, community benefits, improved safety, forest health, and watershed stewardship. With the advent of newer technology for both the conversion of the biomass to energy and the control of potential air emissions released, a new approach to building a facility is being considered. There are multiple emerging bioenergy technologies, as well as a variety of methods to sell the energy and other potential economic attributes of a facility. The feasibility study would also include a process for continuous community involvement and feedback.

The collaborators have also initiated a complementary study funded by the Sierra Nevada Conservancy to investigate the "Value-Added Forest Material Products and Uses for an Integrated Product Yard in the Foresthill Area," (Foresthill VAFM Study). The Foresthill VAFM study will also explore the potential economic and community development benefits to the Foresthill area.

Individual Projects declined: There were no applications declined during 2014.

