

**PLACER COUNTY
OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES**

MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors

FROM: David Boesch, County Executive Officer
By John McEldowney, Program Manager

DATE: May 5, 2015

SUBJECT: Re-appropriate \$82,453.15 in residual project funds from the Secure Rural Schools & Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 and the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 Title III program and fund the Firewise Communities Program.

ACTION REQUESTED

1. Re-appropriate \$82,453.15 in obligated but unspent Secure Rural Schools Title III project funding from previous fiscal years to support the Firewise Communities Program.
2. Obligate \$14,203 in Interest from Fund 340, Subfund 285 to the Firewise Communities Program.
3. Authorize a 45 day public noticing of the planned use of those funds for each project and return to your Board July 7, 2015 with any input from the public and to request final approval of planned expenditures.

BACKGROUND

Public Laws:

The Secure Rural Schools & Community Self-Determination Act HR 2389 aka Public Law (PL) 106-393, was enacted in October 2000 to offset the loss of revenues in rural counties due to declining timber harvests and the decrease of income generation on federal lands. It provided qualifying counties with predictable funding for rural schools and roads for Federal Fiscal Years (FFY) 2001 through 2006 and was extended by Congress through FFY 2007. Despite the extension, spending is limited to previously approved methods or projects.

In October, 2008, Congress enacted the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 (PL 110-343), which included reauthorization of the "Secure Rural Schools" program. However, this law has a significantly lower level of funding and restricts the use of funds to supporting the three bulleted activities below:

- Activities under the Firewise Communities Program
- Reimbursement for Search And Rescue (SAR) on federal lands
- Development of Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP)

Obligated but unspent funds:

Several Secure Rural Schools Title III projects have obligated but unspent funding available going back to 2009. Some of these, such as the Chipper Program Augmentation funding below, were allocations set up to support emergency funding in the event other sources of funding were exhausted. Other projects have smaller residual amounts remaining.

FY 2009/2010 - Chipper Program Augmentation (110-343)	\$35,000.00
FY 2009/2010 - Woody Biomass (106-393)	\$2,107.67
FY 2010/2011 - Community Biomass (106-393)	\$2,412.00
FY 2010/2011 - Firewise Public Information Materials (110-343)	\$3,449.36
FY 2010/2011 - Chipper Program Projects (110-343)	\$15,000.00
FY 2011/2012 - Biomass Strategic Plan Formulation (106-393)	\$5,000.00
FY 2012/2013 - Project Canyon Safe Support (110-343)	\$2,502.00
FY 2012/2013 - Public Education Initiatives (110-343)	\$10,627.41
FY 2013/2014 - Green Waste Drop Off Days (110-343)	<u>\$6,354.58</u>
Funding to be Re-appropriated	\$82,453.02
Available interest from Trust (110-343)	<u>\$14,203.13</u>
Total Funds Available	\$96,656.15

Unspent funding from the above projects will allow the County to focus on and support the Firewise Communities Program through FY 2015/2016. In addition, unobligated interest from the Forest Reserve/Title II Fund (340/285) in the amount of \$14,203.13 is recommended to be obligated to the Firewise Communities Program.

Recommended use of funds:

PL 110-343: Staff recommends aggregating these unspent funds, together with the above Trust Fund interest dollars, and channeling these funds into activities under the Firewise Communities Program, which is a specified authorized use. As defined by law, the Firewise Communities Program is designed to provide homeowners in fire sensitive ecosystems education and assistance with implementing techniques in home siting, home construction and home landscaping that can increase the protection of people and property from wildfires. The goal is to involve homeowners, community leaders, planners, developers, and others in the design of a safe community as well as effective emergency response.

45 Day Public Notice Period: Upon approval by your Board, staff will commence the required 45-day public noticing period and return to your Board July 7, 2015 with any input from the community and to request final approval of planned expenditures.

FISCAL IMPACT: There is no impact to the General Fund as a result of these actions. There is adequate fund balance in Placer County's Forest Reserve/Title III Fund (340/285) to support these activities.