

**PLACER COUNTY
OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES**

MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors

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

DATE: July 7, 2015

SUBJECT: Re-appropriate Secure Rural Schools & Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 and the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 Title III program funds

ACTION REQUESTED

Re-appropriate \$82,453.15 in obligated but unspent Secure Rural Schools Title III project funding from previous fiscal years and include \$14,203 in interest from Fund 340, Subfund 285 to support the Firewise Communities Program.

BACKGROUND

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.

Public Laws:

On May 5, 2015 the Board first heard this request to 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. In addition, \$14,203 in interest from Fund 340, Subfund 285 was requested to be included to support the Firewise Communities Program. This request is returning to the Board after a 45 day noticing period for public comment to request final approval.

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 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.

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| 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

Re-appropriation of these funds required a 45 day public noticing of the planned use of those funds for each project to gather input and comments from the public before requesting final approval of planned expenditures. The 45 day public noticing period has concluded with no additional comments from the public. Therefore, final approval of this plan to allocate these funds to the Firewise Communities Program is recommended.

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.