



Board Agenda Item 35

DATE: June 18, 2024

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBMITTED BY: Melissa Cregan, Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer of Weights and Measures

SUBJECT: Funds for local assistance in regard to Pierce's Disease and its vectors, and other designated pests and diseases

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Authorize the Fresno County Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer of Weights and Measures (the "Agricultural Commissioner") to be the local public entity to approve and execute the Glassy-winged Sharpshooter (GWSS) Survey / Trapping / Regulatory / Treatment agreement (approximately \$917,237) and the GWSS Program - Areawide Agreement (approximately \$272,061) on behalf of the County, for FY 2024-25, approved as to legal form by County Counsel and approved as to accounting form by the Auditor-Controller/Treasurer-Tax Collector, in order for the County to receive funds allocated by the California Department of Food and Agriculture for local assistance in regard to Pierce's Disease and its vectors, and other designated pests and diseases.

There is no additional Net County Costs associated with the recommended action, which is required in order for the Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer of Weights and Measures (Agricultural Commissioner) to execute two different Revenue Agreements (Agreement) with the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) for FY 2024-25. This item is countywide.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

If your Board does not approve the recommended action, the Department of Agriculture (Department) will not receive funds from CDFA in FY 2024-25 for local assistance in regard to Pierce's Disease and its vectors, and other designated pests and diseases. Alternatively, your Board may direct the Department to bring these specific revenue agreements before the Board for consideration and approval.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no increase in Net County Costs associated with the recommended action, which will allow the Agricultural Commissioner to approve and execute two Agreements with the CDFA for a combined total of approximately \$1,189,298.

DISCUSSION:

The Glassy-winged Sharpshooter (GWSS), *Homalodisca vitripennis*, is a vector of Pierce's Disease which kills grapevines, and which has historically devastated significant wine growing areas in Riverside County. The pest has spread widely in Southern California counties and has been detected within urban and rural areas of Fresno County. There is no cure for Pierce's Disease, and once infected, the grapevine will die. GWSS is a highly injurious and economically significant pest.

The Department has conducted the Pierce's Disease Control Program (PDCP) within Fresno County with funds from the CDFA for more than 20 years. The CDFA has offered the Department two Agreements, GWSS Survey / Trapping / Regulatory / Treatment (approximately \$917,237) and GWSS Program - Areawide (Approximately \$272,061), in FY 2024-25 to implement the PDCP in Fresno County.

These programs are designed to protect the County's \$1,241,178,000 grape industry (gross value in 2022). The Department's participation in this program has been successful in slowing the further spread of this pest to rural and agricultural areas. The United States Department of Agriculture and the CDFA identified Fresno County as a final frontier in preventing the spread of GWSS into grape growing regions in Northern California. The availability of these funds aids in the continuing suppression of GWSS while the scientific community continues to research this pest and develop Pierce's Disease resistant grape varieties. Since 2012, your Board has annually authorized the Agricultural Commissioner to execute specific proposed revenue agreements with various agencies.

On April 9, 2024, your Board authorized the Agricultural Commissioner to approve and execute specific revenue agreements with CDFA for FY 2024-25, and to amend the same agreements for any potential increase or decrease of an amount not exceeding the greater of 15% of the maximum, or \$10,000, subject to approval as to legal form by County Counsel, and approval as to accounting form by the Auditor-Controller/Treasurer-Tax Collector. These two Agreements are among those the Agricultural Commissioner is authorized by your Board to approve and execute.

On September 16, 2014, your Board authorized the Chairman to retroactively designate the Agricultural Commissioner as the local public entity to manage the PDCP and receive funds allocated by the CDFA for local assistance in regard to Pierce's Disease and its vectors. California Food and Agriculture Code section 6046(e) states, in part, that "funds shall be made available to a local public entity, or local public entities, designated by that county's board of supervisors." Accordingly, the CDFA changed the Agreement requirements and now require a Minute Order or Board Resolution from your Board designating the Agricultural Commissioner as the local public entity to receive funds allocated by the CDFA for local assistance in regard to Pierce's Disease and its vectors, and other designated pests and diseases.

Therefore, your Board's approval of the recommended action is vital so that the Agricultural Commissioner can continue receiving funds from the CDFA for FY 2024-25 to assist in controlling the spread of the GWSS, the vector of Pierce's Disease, a devastating grape disease, to protect Fresno County's grape industry.

REFERENCE MATERIAL:

BAI #35, April 9, 2024

BAI #36, September 16, 2014

CAO ANALYST:

Ahla Yang