



Board Agenda Item 53

DATE: June 18, 2019

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBMITTED BY: Steven E. White, Director
Department of Public Works and Planning

SUBJECT: Cooperative Agreements/Licenses with Highway 168 Fire Safe Council

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Sitting as the Fresno County Waterworks District 41 Governing Board:

Approve and authorize the Director of the Department of Public Works and Planning, or designee, to execute a Cooperative Agreement/License with the Highway 168 Fire Safe Council for the creation of the Shaver West Shaded Fuel Break through two properties owned by Fresno County Waterworks District 41 - Shaver Lake, after Notices of Exemption are filed with the State Clearinghouse by the Highway 168 Fire Safe Council. (\$0)

Sitting as the Fresno County Board of Supervisors:

Approve and authorize the Director of the Department of Public Works and Planning, or designee, to execute a Cooperative Agreement/License with the Highway 168 Fire Safe Council for the creation of the Shaver West Shaded Fuel Break through two properties owned by the County of Fresno, after Notices of Exemption are filed with the State Clearinghouse by the Highway 168 Fire Safe Council. (\$0)

Approval of the recommended actions will authorize the Director of the Department of Public Works and Planning, or his designee, to sign a cooperative agreement/license with the Highway 168 Fire Safe Council (Council) for the creation of the Shaver West Shaded Fuel Break (Fuel Break), per Public Resources Code, section 4141. The intention is to perform a carefully planned thinning of dense vegetation, so fire does not easily move from the ground into the overhead tree canopy. The agreement applies to four specific properties owned by the County and Fresno County Waterworks District 41. In regards to the environmental review process, Council representatives have filed a Notice of Exemption (NOE), ensuring that the project complies with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The proposed Fuel Break pertains to a location in District 5.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

Your Board may not approve the recommended actions; however, the Fuel Break project would not enter the four properties owned by the County of Fresno and Fresno County Waterworks District 41 (WWD 41) referenced in the agreement.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no Net County Cost associated with the recommended actions. The recommended agreements have no associated dollar value. The Council will use Fire Prevention Grant funding through the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) sponsored California Climate Investments program to perform the work.

DISCUSSION:

The Council approached Department staff in April 2019 with a request for authority to perform the creation of the Fuel Break through property owned by the County and WWD 41. A Council representative presented the project to the Shaver Lake Citizens Advisory Committee (SLCAC) at their public meeting held on April 26, 2019. The SLCAC fully supports the agreement with the Council for the Fuel Break.

The Fuel Break travels approximately six miles in length and creates, at minimum, a 400-foot wide area of well-spaced vegetation to aide in fire suppression. The projects placement, shown in Attachment A, takes advantage of existing terrain to provide a line of defense in the unfortunate, but highly likely event of a wildfire emerging from Jose Basin.

The Cooperative Agreements with the Council contain a mutual hold harmless clause. For each parcel, the Highway 168 Fire Safe Council will be responsible for filing Notices of Exemption under CEQA, pursuant to fuel hazard reduction emergency rules found at 14 California Code of Regulations, sections 1052.1 and 1052.4 *et al.*

With your Board's approval, the Director will be authorized to execute the Cooperative Agreement/License with Council for the Fuel Break through property owned by the County (Attachment B) and WWD 41 (Attachment C).

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

Attachments A - C

CAO ANALYST:

Sonia M. De La Rosa