File #: 19-1286, **Version:** 1

DATE: October 8, 2019

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBMITTED BY: Jean M. Rousseau, County Administrative Officer / Emergency Services Director

SUBJECT: Continuation of Tree Mortality Local Emergency Status in Fresno County

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):
Adopt Resolution proclaiming continuation of the local emergency status relating to the extremely high levels of tree mortality and hazardous conditions created by the drought and request that the Governor continue to provide resources and support to mitigate risk of falling trees and increased fire hazard.
Approval of the recommended action will ensure the local emergency status remains in effect and permit the potential recovery of eligible costs. This item pertains to locations in District 5.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

No viable options are available.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The recommended action is necessary to ensure specific liability protection, emergency powers of the Emergency Services Director, and potential recovery of eligible costs, if any, from State and Federal emergency funds.

DISCUSSION:

On September 22, 2015, the Board approved Resolution No. 15-463 requesting a state of emergency be proclaimed in the County due to the degraded forest conditions and imminent threat from catastrophic fires and extreme drought.

On May 24, 2016, the Board approved the Emergency Services Director's submittal of an Application for State financial assistance under the California Disaster Assistance Act (CDAA) to the California Office of Emergency Service (OES) to mitigate tree mortality.

On January 31, 2017, the Board approved 13 revenue agreements with the California Department of Forestry and the Fire Prevention (CAL FIRE) to receive FY 2016-17 State Responsibility Area (SRA) Fire Prevention and TM (Tree Mortality) Grant Program funds for the removal of dead and dying trees that are within 300 feet of permanent private structures, roadways, and public or private infrastructure. The assessment, identification, and removal of dead and dying trees for these 13 grants is complete. Additionally, the Board increased the Purchasing Manager's previous authorization to contract for services related to tree mortality from $2,000,000 to $6,600,000.

In May 2017, 5,200 dead and dying trees were removed from Huntington Lake Road using CDAA funding. In

February 2018, 2,300 dead and dying trees were removed from Auberry Road. By November 30, 2018, 2,100 dead and dying trees were removed from Bretz Mill Road. An additional 4,000 dead and dying trees have been identified for removal on Huntington Lake Road.

On April 17, 2018, the Board approved a revenue agreement with CAL FIRE for $880,133 in Local Assistance for Tree Mortality Grant Program (LATM) funding that allows the County to cover the 25% CDAA cost share requirement and draw down an additional $2,640,399 in CDAA funding. Additionally, your Board increased the Purchasing Manager's aggregate threshold to procure tree removal services from $6,600,000 to $12,120,532.

On November 6, 2018, the Board approved two revenue agreements with CAL FIRE for $1,390,032 in Fire Prevention Program Grant (FPP) funding to continue contracting for the removal of dead and dying trees that are within 300 feet of permanent private structures, roadways, and public or private infrastructure. Additionally, on January 8, 2019, the Board increased the Purchasing Manager's aggregate threshold to procure tree removal services from $12,120,532 to $13,510,564.

On August 6, 2019, the Board approved a revenue agreement with CAL FIRE for $1,680,000 in FPP funding to continue contracting for the removal of dead and dying trees that are within 300 feet of permanent private structures, roadways, and public or private infrastructure on the State Route 168 corridor.

The tree mortality budget includes funding from the following sources:

- CDAA: $7,140,399 plus the County General Fund match in the amount of $1,500,000
- SRA: $2,600,000
- LATM: $880,133
- FPP: $3,070,032
  TOTAL $15,190,564

The County's OES has coordinated an emergency response-planning meeting with all organized camps operating in the County. Additionally, the Office worked with CAL FIRE and the Sheriff's Office to conduct pre-fire evacuation planning meetings for communities in high hazard areas.

Forest degradation conditions have not improved as the tree mortality disaster has continued and escalated in eastern Fresno County. Mountain communities continue to be threatened by the potential of falling trees and wildfires.

Fresno County Ordinance Code, Chapter 2.44.060 requires your Board to review the need to continue the local emergency at least once every 30 days until terminated; state law requires the same. The local emergency must be terminated at the earliest possible date when conditions warranting proclamation have ended.

REFERENCE MATERIAL:

BAI #33, September 10, 2019
BAI #45, August 6, 2019
BAI #48, November 6, 2018
BAI #39, April 17, 2018
BAI #37, January 31, 2017
BAI #13, May 24, 2016
BAI #21, September 22, 2015
BAI #25, December 16, 2014

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

On file with Clerk - Resolution
On file with Clerk - Map of Affected Area
On file with Clerk - Proclamation of State Emergency

CAO ANALYST:

Sonia M. De La Rosa