

BOARD OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION

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To: Resource Protection
Committee (RPC)

Date: June 16, 2015

From: Kevin Conway, Staff Forester

Subject: State Responsibility Area Fire Prevention Fund (SRAFPF) Grant Development

Chair Saito and members of the Committee,

Staff would like to bring forward a few specific points of discussion as the RPC continues to develop the SRAFPF Grant Program.

Fire Safe Council (FSC) Coordinators

Board Counsel performed a cursory review of PRC § 4210, et. seq., in response to a request from this Committee to evaluate the appropriateness of allowing SRAFPF Grant funds to support the salaries of County FSC Coordinators. Counsel indicated that the statute leaves the Board discretion to define fire prevention activities that benefit the fee payers. There is nothing in the statute that expressly prohibits the Board from allowing grant funds to pay that portion of a County FSC Coordinator's salary that is found to provide fire prevention benefits to the fee payers.

As currently proposed the SRAFPF Grant Program could only provide funding for an FSC Coordinator through their direct involvement in a SRAFPF Grant funded project, or through the maximum 12% administrative charge allowed to grantees. Concerned stakeholders have requested that SRAFPF Grant funding be available to directly support County FSC Coordinators independent of their involvement in a specific project.

Signage

In reviewing other grant programs, staff has come across the requirement that grantees in some way indicate the source of funding during project implementation. Would the Committee be interested in adding a requirement that successful grant applicants include, to the extent practicable, signage informing the public that the project received funds through the State Responsibility Area Fire Prevention Fee?

Grant Application Review

The SRAFPF Grant Procedural Guide describes the grant applicant requirements for each phase of the application process, but does not thoroughly describe how that material will be evaluated or the decision process for selecting projects. Based in part on previous discussions of the Committee, staff proposes the following:

- a. Administrative review of Concept Proposal
 - i. 2 reviewers, Pass/Fail
 - ii. If first 2 reviewers are not in agreement, a 3rd reviewer will determine Pass/Fail
- b. Technical Review of Scope of Work, Budget, Map
 - i. 2 reviewers, average score if difference is less than 10%
 - ii. If off by more than 10%, 3rd reviewer scores and all scores are averaged
- c. Selection at Sacramento level
 - i. Grants ranked based on total score from Technical Review by CAL FIRE Unit/Contract County
 - ii. Funds made available to CAL FIRE Units/Contract Counties commensurate with the amount of fees collected from that CAL FIRE Unit/Contract County and amount of funds appropriated to the SRAFPF Grant Program
 - iii. Grants will be awarded to highest ranking projects, in order, until available funding in the CAL FIRE Unit/Contract County is not sufficient to cover the next highest ranking project
 - iv. Any residual funds will be used to maintain the proportional distribution of funds throughout the State over a 7-year period

An option to consider for c(iii) above is to allow for funding of the next highest ranking project in the CAL FIRE Unit/Contract County with a total grant request less than the available funding.

The SRA Drought Grants award process included the Director as the final approver of selected grants. Does the Committee want to retain this strategy? Does the Department want to retain this strategy?