

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**



ITEM: 3.24
(ID # 17367)

MEETING DATE:

Tuesday, December 14, 2021

FROM : FIRE DEPARTMENT:

SUBJECT: FIRE DEPARTMENT: Riverside County Elsinore Front Country Fuel Break Project - Adoption of Project Specific Analysis (PSA)/Addendum, Mitigation Monitoring Reporting Program (MMRP) for Environmental Assessment Number 2021PSA01, District 1 and 2. [California Climate Investment Grant - 100%] (County Fire Staff to File Notice of Determination)

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Adopt the PSA/Addendum to the California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection California Vegetation Treatment Program Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (CalFire VTP PEIR), Findings of Fact, Standard Project Requirements and Mitigation Measures (SPR/MM) identified in the MMRP for Environmental Assessment Number 2021PSA01, based on the findings incorporated in the PSA/Addendum and the conclusion that the Elsinore Front Country Fuel Break Project will not have a significant effect on the environment with implementation of the Project requirements and mitigation measures contained therein, and the PSA/Addendum reflects the Board's independent judgment and analysis; and
2. Approve the Elsinore Front Country Fuel Break Project.

ACTION:

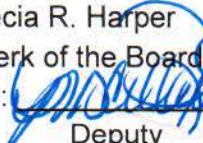
Bill Weiser, Fire Department Chief

12/1/2021

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

On motion of Supervisor Washington, seconded by Supervisor Spiegel and duly carried by unanimous vote, IT WAS ORDERED that the above matter is approved as recommended

Ayes: Jeffries, Spiegel, Washington, Perez and Hewitt
Nays: None
Absent: None
Date: December 14, 2021
xc: Fire

Kecia R. Harper
Clerk of the Board
By: 
Deputy

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE,
STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

FINANCIAL DATA	Current Fiscal Year:	Next Fiscal Year:	Total Cost:	Ongoing Cost
COST	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
NET COUNTY COST	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
SOURCE OF FUNDS: California Climate Investment Grant – 100%			Budget Adjustment: No	
			For Fiscal Year: 21/22	

C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION: Approve

BACKGROUND:

Summary

The Riverside County Fire Department (RCFD) was awarded funding in the amount of \$1,898,303 for the Elsinore Front Country Fuel Break project agreement as approved via MO#3.20 on November 6, 2018. The project intends to establish a fuel break at the base of the slope of the Santa Ana Mountains, where it is situated directly west of community areas in Riverside County, California. A critical component to completion of this project is the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process and documentation. As a part of this process, a Registered Professional Forester, along with an Archeologist and Biologist, complete environmental surveys on the proposed project area which will result in a document outlining the prescribed treatment plan for the fuel break project as well as identifying any mitigation needs to avoid impacts to cultural resources.

In accordance with CEQA (Public Resources Code, §§ 21000-21177) and the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, title 14, sections 15000 et seq.), including Section 15063, RCFD has reviewed the project under CEQA compliance as a later activity covered by the 2019 California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (CALFire) Vegetation Treatment Program (VTP) Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR).

RCFD's contracted project management firm, Blackfox Timber Management Group, has prepared a Project Specific Analysis (PSA)/Addendum to evaluate if the proposed project work is within the scope of the PEIR, consider revisions or changes to the PEIR that would expand its coverage to include all project areas, and provide environmental information to RCFD to aid in its consideration of subgrant funding allocations for work to be funded by the CAL FIRE grant and project work to be performed. The project is described in more detail in the PSA/Addendum.

The County is required to adopt a Mitigation Monitoring Reporting Program (MMRP) for the Standard Project Requirements and Mitigation Measures (SPR/MM) identified in the PSA/Addendum to mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment. The PSA/Addendum demonstrated that the project would not have any significant impacts on the environment with the implementation of the mitigation measures identified. The Notice of

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE,
STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

Determination will be filed by Riverside County Fire Department staff with the County Clerk within five days of Board of Supervisors approval.

During the early stages of project development, initial Tribal Consultation was sent to relevant tribes on February 5, 2020. Four tribes responded, two of which were interested in project development and two declined. As project development continued, it was determined that the project would be within the scope of the CalFire VTP PEIR. Tribal Consultation under Assembly Bill 52 was completed during the preparation of the CalFire VTP PEIR. In accordance with the terms of the SPR/MM for the CalFire VTP PEIR which require notification to geographically affiliated Tribes, additional Tribal coordination occurred during preparation of the PSA/Addendum to the CalFire VTP PEIR. The Tribes were again notified about the project on June 17, 2021. One Tribe (Rincon Band of Luiseño Indians) requested consultation, which took place on August 5, and August 18, 2021. As this Tribe does not have Tribal monitors, the Rincon Band requested that Pechanga Band monitors be incorporated on their behalf and an agreement covering these services will be forthcoming prior to project work starting. No other Tribes requested consultation within the 30-day notification period.

SPR/MM were revised/developed in coordination with Tribes and based on Tribal input to address concerns related to the accidental discovery of cultural resources. Compliance with these design and mitigation measures will provide a redundancy mechanism to ensure that potential impacts from inadvertent discoveries of archeological resources do not occur and remain less than significant.

Construction of the Project is anticipated to begin in December of 2021.

The Licensed Timber Operator Agreement Approval Form 11 for this Grant Program is concurrently being heard on the Dec. 14, 2021 Board of Supervisors hearing as Item No. 17350.

Impact on Residents and Businesses

The Elsinore Front Country Fuel Break Project will provide additional protection from wildfire threat to adjacent residents in Wildomar, Lakeland Village, Lake Elsinore, Horsethief Canyon Ranch, Temescal Valley, and Trilogy communities in Riverside County.

Additional Fiscal Information

The Board previously approved the costs associated with the Project on November 6, 2018 (Item 3.20). This Board action will have no financial impact to the Project.

Attachments:

- PSA/Addendum and MMRP
- Findings of Fact
- Notice of Determination

SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE,
STATE OF CALIFORNIA


Rebecca S. Cortez, Principal Management Analyst 12/6/2021


Juan C. Perez, Chief Operating Officer 12/8/2021


Gregory V. Priarios, Director County Counsel 12/1/2021