



Legislation Text

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To: Sonoma County Board of Supervisors

Department or Agency Name(s): County Administrator's Office

Staff Name and Phone Number: Michael Gossman, 565-2341

Vote Requirement: Informational Only

Supervisory District(s): All

Title:

Recovery Update

Recommended Actions:

Receive an update on the status of recovery operations, planning and seeking of funding opportunities following the October 2017 Sonoma Complex Fires (Informational Only)

Executive Summary:

The aftermath of the October 2017 Sonoma Complex Fires presents ongoing risks to the residents, property, and environment of Sonoma County. Office of Recovery and Resiliency staff provides the Board regular updates on recovery efforts, including building permits; external funding and grant efforts; and relevant legislation.

Discussion:

In the early morning hours of October 9, 2017, County staff activated the Emergency Operations Center in response to the Sonoma Complex Fires, which eventually burned 173 square miles and destroyed over 7,000 structures, including 5,143 homes. On December 19, 2017, the Board of Supervisors established the Office of Recovery and Resiliency (Office) with the mission to develop a strategy that addresses the immediate and long-term recovery and resiliency efforts needed to help Sonoma County rebuild and recover from the wildfires. This Office continues to actively pursue recovery efforts, and to work with other County departments, agencies, and districts to assist Sonoma County residents in the process of rebuilding.

In an effort to keep the Board and community informed about the County's recovery efforts, the Office prepares a standing agenda item for each Board meeting, typically included on the consent calendar. This update includes information on: Ongoing Recovery Efforts; Housing; Recovery Related External Funding Opportunities; and other items of interest. In addition to the standing agenda item, the Office will be presenting quarterly updates to the Board on the status of the implementation of the Recovery and Resiliency Framework. The quarterly updates are scheduled for the following Board meetings this calendar year: April 2, July 9, and November 5, 2019.

1. Ongoing Recovery Efforts

A. Debris Removal

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in May 2018 concluded the Government-Sponsored Debris Removal Program in Sonoma County on 3,674 participating properties and stopped accepting new debris-

related complaints. If property owners require additional clarification specific to the Debris Removal Program, they can contact the California Office of Emergency Services Recovery Section at 916-845-8200. If property owners have other questions or concerns, they can contact Sonoma County's Office of Recovery and Resiliency at 707-565-1222.

B. Hazardous Tree Removal

In December, 2018, the County, through a contractor, began removing fire-damaged trees located within the public right-of-way that were identified as "extreme" or "high" risk to public safety. A total of 560 trees are to be removed with this contract. As of February 25, 2019, 302 trees have been removed. Completion of this project has been extended due to winter weather conditions. Project completion is anticipated in May 2019.

In March 2019, a second tree contract will begin removing fire-damaged trees located on private property near the public right-of-way. This contract will remove 259 trees that have similarly been identified as "extreme" or "high" risk to public safety.

2. **Housing**

A. Resiliency Permit Center

Permit Sonoma established a Resiliency Permit Center providing expedited comprehensive permitting and inspection services for those who lost homes in the fires and their representatives dealing with reconstruction of approximately 3,000 residential structures destroyed or damaged by the Sonoma Complex Fire. Services at the Resiliency Permit Center began February 13, 2018.

In 2019, the Resiliency Permit Center is providing, free of charge, a general review of bid proposals to fire survivors in the unincorporated areas to help them determine where scope and pricing are appropriate.

B. Rebuilding Permits

The County has issued 918 building permits for homes as of February 27, 2019; 130 permits are in process; 42 homes have been finished. For the latest numbers, go to

[<http://sonomacounty.ca.gov/PRMD/Performance-Data/Rebuilding-Permits-Data/>](http://sonomacounty.ca.gov/PRMD/Performance-Data/Rebuilding-Permits-Data/)

The City of Santa Rosa has issued 1,210 building permits for homes as of February 27, 2019; 335 permits are in process; 177 homes have been finished. For latest numbers, go to

[<https://www.srcity.org/2675/Rebuilding>](https://www.srcity.org/2675/Rebuilding)

See attachment: Permit Report 2-27-19

3. Recovery-Related External Funding Opportunities

A. Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery

Announcement of \$212 Million: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced on April 10, 2018, that California would be receiving \$212 million to support long-term disaster recovery through the Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) program, including \$124 million for unmet disaster recovery needs, and \$88 million for preparedness and mitigation. The Federal Register governing the \$124 million portion for unmet disaster recovery needs was issued on August 20, 2018.

Action Plan: the \$124 million portion for unmet disaster recovery needs, California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), as Grantee and receiver of the funds, has drafted an Action Plan that has been submitted to HUD. The Action Plan details the proposed use of all funds. HCD's proposed Action Plan includes a budget of \$47.6 million for an owner-occupied housing program, \$66.7 million for a multifamily housing program, \$3.5 million for a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Public Assistance (PA) match program, and \$6.2 million for administration.

The owner-occupied program is proposed to be a Statewide program by HCD. HCD will release a Survey to help finalize the owner-occupied program prior to opening up the application process.

The multi-family program will have funds allocated directly to the local jurisdiction. This allocation is proportionate to the number of Low and Moderate Income renters within the disaster areas of each jurisdiction. As proposed, Sonoma County would receive \$4,698,809 and the City of Santa Rosa would receive \$38,469,772.

Status of \$88 Million for Preparedness and Mitigation Funding: HUD to develop and finalize the rules and publish in the Federal Register in order to begin the funding cycle. The date the Federal Register will be published has not been announced but is likely to be in March 2019 or later.

B. CAL FIRE Grants

On December 19, 2018, the County submitted a grant application to CAL FIRE for the "Fine-Scale Decision Support Data Toolkit to Accelerate the Scale and Pace of Hazardous Fuel Reduction". Permit Sonoma's Fire Prevention Division is the lead in partnership with Pepperwood Preserve. The purpose of

the project is to help reduce loss of life and property in Sonoma County by:

1. Creating and using a new, science-based decision support “Toolkit” to assist with fire management planning;
2. Providing FireWise program and chipper support to private landowners with identified high fuels treatment needs; and
3. Conducting pilot implementation projects on Regional Parks to refine and demonstrate Toolkit functionality.

The total project cost is \$785,558: CAL FIRE, \$710,683 and Match, \$74,875.

4. Other Items of Interest

A. Forest Stewardship Coordination

The Office of Recovery & Resiliency convened an event on January 11, 2019, at the Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation to kick off a campaign to increase the pace, scale and effectiveness of management on public and private forest lands to reduce wildfire hazards, benefit life safety and ecosystem services, and improve landscape resiliency. Approximately 70 people with wide-ranging affiliations participated. This was a key step in creating a “network of networks” that will pursue aligned and connected efforts at the local, regional and state scales. The event included several speakers invited to raise awareness about current and pending government policies, initiatives, regulations, programs and funding. A dozen brief presentations on ongoing efforts and ideas from landowners, local organizations, researchers, and investors also were shared. County staff helped facilitate discussion groups to receive input, and an online survey is collecting information that will be reported up to the Northern Regional Prioritization Working Group of the Governor’s Forest Management Task Force. Presentation materials are accessible at

[<http://sonomacounty.ca.gov/Office-of-Recovery-and-Resiliency/Forest-Stewardship/>](http://sonomacounty.ca.gov/Office-of-Recovery-and-Resiliency/Forest-Stewardship/).

The Pepperwood Preserve and EBalive, Inc. worked with the Sonoma County Forest Conservation Working Group under a grant from the Hewlett Foundation and in collaboration with County agencies, to convene an event on January 30, 2019. Presentations and participants focused on organizational and resource needs to improve the health and resilience of private and public natural and working lands. The Office of Recovery & Resiliency presented an overview of efforts to-date and a summary of the County’s continuing campaign. A key objective for this “Next Steps-Moving Forward Together” event was to take action towards solving organizational, governance, financial and operational needs. Additionally, the discussions and break-out groups helped generate commitments of support and direct involvement from the wide range of stakeholders invited. County staff from multiple agencies are continuing to coordinate on follow-up actions.

B. CSAC Fire Recovery Summit and Roundtable

On February 13, 2019, California State Association of Counties (CSAC) hosted a Fire Recovery Summit and Roundtable in Sacramento. CalOES, FEMA and the Department of Finance provided updates on State and Federal response to fire impacted Counties.

CalOES discussed 2017 and 2018 fires and predicts the 2019 fire season to be on par with 2018. A supplemental appropriation package has been sent to congress to implement federal programs at the local level.

The Department of Finance recognized a need to focus on property tax backfill, 911 improvements, and evacuation measures for vulnerable populations.

The roundtable discussion included updates from each of the fire impacted counties on recovery efforts and current challenges.

C. Insurance Commissioner Meeting

On February 14, 2019, Supervisors Gorin and Zane met with Insurance Commissioner Ricardo Lara to discuss insurance challenges for Sonoma County wildfire survivors including the upcoming expiration of additional living expenses and the many survivors that were underinsured and unable to rebuild. The Commissioner was invited to Sonoma County to hear directly from survivors and the visit is currently being planned.

Prior Board Actions:

Regular Recovery Updates have been provided to your Board since November 2017.

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 18-19 Adopted	FY19-20 Projected	FY 20-21 Projected
Budgeted Expenses			

Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures			
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
Total Sources			

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

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Staffing Impacts:			
Position Title (Payroll Classification)	Monthly Salary Range (A - I Step)	Additions (number)	Deletions (number)

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

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Attachments:

Permit Report 2-27-19

Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board:

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