



Legislation Text

File #: 2022-0316, **Version:** 1

To: Board of Supervisors

Department or Agency Name(s): Permit Sonoma

Staff Name and Phone Number: John Mack (707) 565-1233

Vote Requirement: Majority

Supervisorial District(s): Countywide

Title:

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) Staffing

Recommended Action:

Adopt Resolution amending Permit Sonoma Department FY 2021-22 Position Allocation needed to support and execute federal grant award requirements. The resolution extends the term of three (3.0) existing time-limited allocations through May 3, 2025; and adds five (5.0) new time-limited full-time equivalent positions effective from May 3, 2022 through May 3, 2025.

Executive Summary:

Since the 2017 Wildfires the county has been awarded eight (8) federal grants supporting a total of \$16 million of community projects and services that are intended to establish a County wildfire resiliency program.

Total cost is financed with 75% or \$12 million from federal awards and 25% or \$4 million in local match from the Board's Recovery and Resiliency HMGP set aside. Of the \$16 million total of available funds, about \$1.14 million has been spent.

In order to deliver on the contracted award agreements, department management recommends extending the term of 3.0 existing FEMA grant program oversight positions, add 2.0 technical positions to deliver vegetation management services to expanded county areas, and add 3.0 that will provide mapping, administrative, and accounting support to the overall Hazard Mitigation and Wildfire Adaption program Permit Sonoma will be delivering to the community.

Discussion:

Since applying for its first round of FEMA funding after the 2017 Tubbs-Nuns Fire, Permit Sonoma has developed multiple multi-million dollar proposals to create and staff a County wildfire resiliency programmatic effort to 1) Retrofitting existing housing infrastructure with structure hardening and defensible space; 2) Undertake large-scale vegetation management with the County as the lead agency; and 3) Implement landscape-based **whole community** fire resiliency planning and implementation.

In order to deliver on the FEMA HMGP awards secured dedicated staff is need by way of both extending existing staff and adding new positions, as follows:

A. Extend the following three (3.0) time-limited positions originally approved by the Board in 2020 (Resolution 19-0395) for a term of three years ending in May 3, 2025:

- Department Program Manager (Overall FEMA Grant Program Administrator)
- Department Analyst (House-Outward Program Manager)
- Marketing Specialist (Outreach and Engagement Project Manager)

The existing time-limited positions remaining term total cost is estimated at \$2,138,278 and it will be financed within the remaining \$15,017,203 million project funding balance associated with the following awards:

- \$50,164 Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan,
- \$42,171 Community Wildfire Protection Plan,
- \$1,692,510 Wildfire Adapted Part 1: Phase 1 | Parcel Inspection Assessment and Completion of Environmental Review,
- \$4,363,268 Wildfire Adapted Part 1: Phase 2 | Implement Land Owner Cost Share Program for Defensible Space and Structural Hardening, \$2,869,090 Wildfire Adapted Part 2 | Additional Parcel Inspection Assessments and Cost Share Program for Defensible Space and Structural Hardening,
- \$6,000,000 | Sonoma County Hazardous Fuels Management.

The positions coordinate grant activities between consultants and department staff, administers grants, prepares agency report submissions, grant preparation, manages contracts, identifies contractors to accomplish defensible space, and prepares and compiles information for community outreach meetings.

B. In addition to extending the existing positions, management is requesting five (5) new time-limited positions for a term of three years (May 3, 2022 to May 3, 2025) to provide technical mapping and environmental services, mapping and technical environmental review support, clerical capacity, and accounting-reporting services. The new positions requested are:

2.0 Senior Environmental Specialists (Fire-Inward Project Managers, Environmental Reviewers). Forester or Fire Ecologist, Vegetation Management Projects, CEQA (Cal VTP)-NEPA-Permitting. The primary duties for the Senior Environmental Specialists:

- Implement complex, landscape-scale Fire-Inward vegetation management.
- Subject matter expert fir forestry, fire ecology, and plant ecology.
- Provide required environmental review clearances (CEQA, NEPA, permitting).
- Provide overall, on the ground, project management for multi-parcel vegetation treatment.

- Complete all environmental clearances required to implement FEMA grant projects including collecting necessary field data or perform required mitigation monitoring, developing CEQA documents as appropriate for the grants (e.g., Notices of Exemption, CalFire Vegetation Treatment Program EIR documentation, MNDs), providing NEPA documentation support for Grants Administrator and FEMA, and identifying and securing appropriate permits (i.e., Coastal Development Permit, 1600 Permits).

1.0 Secretary (Administrative Support for Fire Prevention Division). Project support and administration for Defensible Space and Structure Hardening program. The primary duties for the Secretary:

- Provide required administrative support for FEMA grant programs including the Fire-Inward Program for defensible space and structural hardening.
- Perform a variety of clerical and minor administrative duties which are unrelated in kind and are auxiliary to the work of the principal administrative employee; may provide supervision for other clerical staff.
- Assists Department Analyst, Fire Marshall and other FEMA project staff with meeting management (i.e., calendaring, agendas, minutes), correspondence and general administrative support.

1.0 Geographic Information Technician I/II (FEMA Project GIS Support). Mapping, Analysis and GIS support for all grants). The primary duties for the Geographic Information Technician I/II:

- Provide extensive required GIS support for all phases of FEMA grant projects.
- Design digital maps using geospatial data and analyze spatial and non-spatial information in support of project area prioritization.

Analyzes data, project, and landscape level planning input to inform program planning.1.0 Accountant I/II (Dedicated FEMA Project Accountant). Develops detailed Cost-Share and Reimbursement Program, Provides General Accounting Support). The primary duties for the Accountant II:

- Key team member in development and implementation of cost-share program for reimbursement of private landowners for approved defensible space and structural hardening projects.
- Ensure compliance with 2 CFR 200 as it relates to indirect cost accounting, invoicing and contract payments. Sets up and maintains expenditure, cost and control ledgers, registers, journals and other records necessary to control fiscal operations.
- Supervises the preparation of accounting summaries and reconciliations of cash accounts, subsidiary ledgers and registers to control ledgers.
- Assist in preparation of Quarterly Reimbursement Forms. Maintains documentation in accordance with federal audit standards.

The three-year total cost for these 5 new time-limited positions is \$2,538,993, which will be financed with the following grants:

- \$50,164 Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan,
- \$42,171 Community Wildfire Protection Plan,
- \$1,692,510 Wildfire Adapted Part 1: Phase 1 | Parcel Inspection Assessment and Completion of Environmental Review,
- \$4,363,268 Wildfire Adapted Part 1: Phase 2 | Implement Land Owner Cost Share Program for Defensible Space and Structural Hardening, \$2,869,090 Wildfire Adapted Part 2 | Additional Parcel Inspection Assessments and Cost Share Program for Defensible Space and Structural Hardening,
- \$6,000,000 | Sonoma County Hazardous Fuels Management.

Strategic Plan:

This item directly supports the County's Five-year Strategic Plan and is aligned with the following pillar, goal, and objective.

Pillar: Climate Action and Resiliency

Goal: Goal 1: Continue to invest in wildfire preparedness and resiliency strategies

Objective: Objective 3: Leverage grant funding to support sustainable vegetation management program.

Prior Board Actions:

September 24, 2019: Board action authorizing the County Administrator's Office to execute two HMGP grant agreements with the Federal Emergency Management Agency for the Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan and the Community Wildfire Prevention Plan updates.

April 21, 2020: Acceptance of Awards from the Federal Emergency Management Agency Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) Permit Sonoma's Wildfire Adapted Sonoma County Part 1 Phase 1 grant

December 14, 2021: Acceptance of Award from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) 2021-1312 Hazard Mitigation Grant Program to accept a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) for the Sonoma County Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project.

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 21-22 Adopted	FY22-23 Projected	FY 23-24 Projected
Budgeted Expenses	\$452,929	\$1,384,528	\$1,413,299
Total Expenditures	\$452,929	\$1,384,528	\$1,413,299
Funding Sources			
GF Recov&Resil Set Aside 25% match			

State/Federal	\$339,697	\$1,038,396	\$1,059,974
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance	\$113,232	\$346,132	\$353,325
Contingencies			
Total Sources	\$452,929	\$1,384,528	\$1,413,299

FISCAL SUMMARY

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

The department will fund the current and future years' S&B appropriations with the awarded and received grants listed above and the 25% county match.

Staffing Impacts:			
Position Title (Payroll Classification)	Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step)	Additions (Number)	Deletions (Number)
Senior Environmental Specialist	\$40.06-\$48.69	2.0 FTE	
Secretary	\$24.30-\$29.55	1.0 FTE	
Geographic Information Technician I/II	\$34.04-\$41-38	1.0 FTE	
Accountant I/II	\$34.13-\$41.49	1.0 FTE	

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

N/A

Attachments:

Attachment 1: Personnel Resolution

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

N/A