The County of Yuba
County Administrator

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Scott Bryan, Deputy Director of Emergency Services
By: Jamme Yang, Management Analyst
SUBJECT: Emergency Services: Approve Wildfire Prevention Grant Application from Yuba Watershed Protection and Fire Safe Council. (Five minutes estimate)
DATE: August 25, 2020
NUMBER: 438/2020

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors approve Yuba Watershed Protection and Fire Safe Council’s application for the Wildfire Prevention Grant for award of the full $250,000 allocated one-time funding.

Background & Discussion

California continues to experience fire disasters as the existing state of our forests creates a natural fuel for major catastrophic wildfires. The tragic fires in 2017 caused a tremendous loss of housing in the foothills region of Yuba County, which was declared both a State and Federal fire disaster area. Ongoing mitigation projects will help reduce overall risk to the population and structures, while also reducing reliance on funding from actual disaster declarations.

Your Board allocated one-time funding in the amount of $250,000 in the Fiscal Year 2019-2020 budget for the public purpose of fire prevention activities in Yuba County’s most fire-prone areas. The Yuba Watershed Protection and Fire Safe Council has made this fire vulnerable region its top priority to suppress and control fires for many years by working collaboratively with community partners and the County.

On January 28, 2020 your Board adopted the Wildfire Prevention Grant Resolution and approved the Wildfire Prevention Grant Funding Agreement. During the review of the Agreement in recognition of the COVID-19 pandemic impacts, staff identified that there is still a need for the public purpose of wildfire prevention projects. An extension of the application deadline date from June 30, 2020 to June 30, 2021 was approved by your Board on June 23, 2020 and would allow the Fire Safe Council additional necessary time to apply for funds to mitigate projects before fire disaster season nears.
Grant funds are to be awarded through an application process reviewed by a grant review committee spearheaded by the Director of Emergency Services or his/her designee. All awards shall include Yuba County Board of Supervisors’ approval and must be for the minimum amount of $25,000 and not to exceed the maximum available amount of $250,000. Any remaining amount under $25,000 will be available for full award under the duration of the application period.

The Yuba Watershed Protection and Fire Safe Council submitted their application for the Wildfire Prevention Grant on August 7, 2020. This application included in the attachments provides a summary table of proposed projects and respective costs estimates. Use of the grant funds must contribute to the emphasis of fire risk reduction activities by landowners and residents in at-risk Yuba County locations to restore and maintain resilient landscapes and create fire-adapted communities. In addition, all programs or activities proposed for funding must meet all criteria set in the executed Wildfire Prevent Grant Funding Agreement. The Grant Review Committee has reviewed the application prior to bringing it before your Board.

Committee Action:

None. This request is brought directly to the full Board of Supervisors, in order to have grant funds available as early as possible.

Fiscal Impact:

$250,000 was previously allocated by your Board and was included in the FY 2019-2020 budget. There will be no fiscal impact for FY 2020-2021.

Attachments

438/2020 Fire Safe Council Application
438/2020 Wildfire Prevention Grant Resolution
438/2020 Amendment 1 to Wildfire Prevention Grant Funding Agreement
438/2020 Wildfire Prevention Grant Application Guidelines
438/2020 501(c)(3) Confirmation Letter