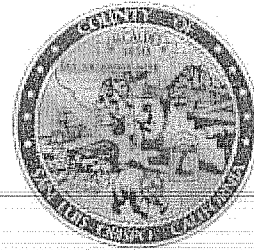


**COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA ITEM TRANSMITTAL**

(1) DEPARTMENT Administrative Office	(2) MEETING DATE 4/21/2015	(3) CONTACT/PHONE Geoff O'Quest, 781-5011	
(4) SUBJECT Request to adopt recommended responses to the San Luis Obispo Grand Jury's 2014-15 report "In a State of Emergency? Assessing Fire Risk in Cambria." All Districts.			
(5) RECOMMENDED ACTION It is recommended that the Board: (1) Adopt and file recommended responses to the San Luis Obispo Grand Jury's 2014-15 report "In a State of Emergency? Assessing Fire Risk in Cambria"; and (2) Forward the approved response to the Presiding Judge and the Grand Jury within 60 days of the Board's approval.			
(6) FUNDING SOURCE(S) N/A	(7) CURRENT YEAR FINANCIAL IMPACT N/A	(8) ANNUAL FINANCIAL IMPACT N/A	(9) BUDGETED? N/A
(10) AGENDA PLACEMENT ☒ Consent ☐ Presentation ☐ Hearing (Time Est. ____) ☐ Board Business (Time Est. ____)			
(11) EXECUTED DOCUMENTS ☐ Resolutions ☐ Contracts ☐ Ordinances ☒ N/A			
(12) OUTLINE AGREEMENT REQUISITION NUMBER (OAR) N/A		(13) BUDGET ADJUSTMENT REQUIRED? BAR ID Number: N/A ☐ 4/5 Vote Required ☐ N/A	
(14) LOCATION MAP N/A	(15) BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT? No	(16) AGENDA ITEM HISTORY ☐ N/A Date: _____	
(17) ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE REVIEW This item was prepared by the County Administrative Office.			
(18) SUPERVISOR DISTRICT(S) All Districts.			

County of San Luis Obispo



TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Geoff O'Quest, Administrative Office / 781-5011

DATE: 4/21/2015

SUBJECT: Request to adopt recommended responses to the San Luis Obispo Grand Jury's 2014-15 report "In a State of Emergency? Assessing Fire Risk in Cambria." All Districts.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board:

- (1) Adopt and file recommended responses to the San Luis Obispo Grand Jury's 2014-15 report "In a State of Emergency? Assessing Fire Risk in Cambria"; and
- (2) Forward the approved response to the Presiding Judge and the Grand Jury within 60 days of the Board's approval.

DISCUSSION

On March 15, 2015, the Grand Jury issued a report on "In a State of Emergency? Assessing Fire Risk in Cambria." This report evaluates the current fire risk as assessed by firefighting professionals, examines the community's preparedness for a disastrous fire, and examines opportunities to mitigate the risk. The report contains four findings and five recommendations. The San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors is required to respond to Findings 1 and 2, and Recommendations 1 and 2. All responses conform to the language required under Penal Code section 933.

Finding #1. The community of Cambria faces a severe fire threat due to a combination of environmental, geographical and demographic factors.

We agree with this finding. The Board also notes that a number of agencies are working together to address the threat in a cooperative manner. These include Cal Fire/County Fire Department, the Cambria Community Services District Fire Department, the County Public Works Department, and the County Planning and Building Department, among others.

In addition, information on the situation has been and will continue to be passed on to the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) by the County Office of Emergency Services (County OES). This helps ensure officials within and throughout various State agencies have been and continue to receive situation updates and thus remain aware of the threat. The intent is to keep State agencies at the Sacramento level aware of the situation in the event additional resources, including funding, becomes available.

Finding #2. The plan for public evacuation in the event of a wildland-urban interface fire or other emergency is not well understood or publicized within the community.

We agree with this finding, although we also note the information is publicly available and efforts such as the active Cambria Community Emergency Response Team demonstrate the availability of public involvement to be prepared for any emergency, including evacuations. And, fire and other preparedness information have been distributed throughout the community in the past.

However, we agree that information may not be well understood or publicized on a widespread basis although that is difficult to measure. We understand local agencies are moving forward on making efforts to publicize the information, including preparedness events in Cambria and we applaud those efforts

Recommendation #1.

The Cambria Community Services District should request that a local emergency be declared regarding the fire risk and forward it to the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors for ratification.

The recommendation has been implemented. On March 26, 2015, the Cambria Community Services District Board of Directors adopted resolution 08-2015 declaring a state of emergency and requesting the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors to immediately declare a local emergency pursuant to the procedures and authority contained in Government Code Sections 8630 et seq.

Recommendation #2. If the Cambria Community Services District fails to request a local emergency, the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors should do so on its own.

This recommendation has been implemented. On March 11, 2014 the Board of Supervisors proclaimed a local emergency as a result of the current drought. Included in the proclamation resolution is reference to fire conditions and water supplies being threatened in a number of communities as it relates to firefighting needs. Actions to mitigate fire danger and response have been moving forward, not only in Cambria, but in other areas of the county as well, and have been shared and discussed with the County Drought Task Force.

Additionally, information specific to the Cambria fire threat has been provided to the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) and has been shared with the State Drought Task Force and Cal OES executive staff as well. Thus, the status of the Cambria fire threat has and will continue to be a high priority issue shared with State agencies. In this way, the County continues to demonstrate to the State the critical nature of the situation and will draw attention to this threat should State or Federal financial assistance become available.

In summary, the proclamation of local emergency adopted by the County Board of Supervisors on March 11, 2014 has already fulfilled the Grand Jury's recommendation.

OTHER DEPARTMENT INVOLVEMENT/IMPACT

The Grand Jury met with CAL FIRE, Cambria Community Services District (CCSD), CCSD Fire Department and San Luis Obispo County Community Fire Safe Council (SLO Fire Safe Council). It also interviewed two former local fire chiefs. The Grand Jury reviewed a number of relevant documents, including organizational websites, National Fire Protection Association guidelines, CCSD Fire Department planning and strategy documents, Cambria FD general plan, and the wildland-urban interface fire (WUI fire) pre-plan for the Cambria area. In addition, the Grand Jury attended three separate student team presentations at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo related to the topic of this Grand Jury report.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are no financial considerations associated with this item.

RESULTS

This response will meet the legal requirements and time frames for responding to a Grand Jury report with findings and recommendations.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Grand Jury's 2014-15 report "In a State of Emergency? Assessing Fire Risk in Cambria"
2. County Board of Supervisors on March 11, 2014 local emergency declaration
3. Cambria Community Services District March 26, 2015 declaration of a state of emergency

IN THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

PRESENT: Supervisors Frank R. Mecham, Adam Hill, Caren Ray, Debbie Arnold, and Chairperson
Bruce S. Gibson

ABSENT: None

RESOLUTION NO. 2014-64

**PROCLAMATION OF LOCAL EMERGENCY BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

The following resolution is hereby offered and read:

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors does hereby find that a dire situation exists due to exceptional drought conditions as reported by the U.S. Drought Monitor as of February 18, 2014, including drought level condition D4 for the entire county, the worst federal drought rating;

WHEREAS, such drought conditions are anticipated to cause water shortages and severe economic losses within San Luis Obispo County;

WHEREAS, rainfall amounts in San Luis Obispo County have made it the driest year on record within the county;

WHEREAS, the primary industry in San Luis Obispo County is agriculture and any economic impact on this industry will have a significant adverse effect on the local economy;

WHEREAS, water allocations from the State had been only 5% and now are set to zero from State Water Project allocations;

WHEREAS, public and private drinking water supplies continue to be threatened due to decreasing supplies of ground water and other sources;

WHEREAS, long term forecasts indicate no relief of the current drought conditions;

WHEREAS, live fuel moistures, the method used to determine the volatility of native vegetation measured throughout the county, have remained below critical levels for the past seven months, and that these conditions combined with unseasonably warm, dry and windy weather have caused unprecedented

continuation of fire season conditions into the winter months, thereby causing CAL FIRE to continue to staff resources at fire season levels;

WHEREAS, water supplies necessary to provide both domestic and fire protection uses are threatened in a number of our communities;

WHEREAS, the long-term ramifications of the drought will have a significant impact on San Luis Obispo County and pose a danger to the health and welfare of its residents, livestock, and agriculture; and

WHEREAS, based on the conditions noted above, the Board of Supervisors does hereby find and determine that there exists a condition of disaster or of extreme peril to the safety of persons and property within the entire County of San Luis Obispo, because of the existence of drought; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors does hereby find that these drought conditions are likely to be beyond the control of the services, personnel, equipment, and facilities of the County and require the combined forces of other political subdivisions to combat; and

WHEREAS, adoption of this Proclamation of Local Emergency is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15269, subd (c).

NOW, THEREFORE the Board of Supervisors does hereby:

1. Proclaim a local emergency in the entire County of San Luis Obispo pursuant to the California Emergency Services Act (commencing with Government Code Section 8550) and Chapter 2.80 of Title 2 of the San Luis Obispo County Code; and

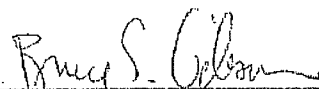
2. ~~Invoke within the County of San Luis Obispo, all of the powers and mechanisms set forth~~ in the California Emergency Services Act and in Chapter 2.80 of the San Luis Obispo County Code, and said powers and mechanisms may hereafter be used by authorized personnel of the County of San Luis Obispo.

This Proclamation of Local Emergency shall be effective immediately and shall remain in effect until the Board of Supervisors proclaim that the local emergency is terminated. The Board of Supervisors shall review the need for continuing the local emergency at least every thirty days.

Upon motion of Supervisor Mecham, seconded by Supervisor Hill, and on the following roll call vote, to-wit:

AYES: Supervisors Mecham, Hill, Ray, Arnold and Chairperson Gibson
NOES: None
ABSENT: None
ABSTAINING: None

The foregoing resolution is hereby ADOPTED:



Chairperson, Board of Supervisors

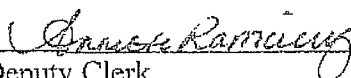
APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGAL EFFECT:

RITA L. NEAL
County Counsel

By: /s/ Timothy McNulty
Assistant County Counsel

ATTEST:

JULIE L. RODEWALD
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

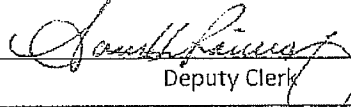
BY: 
Deputy Clerk

STATE OF CALIFORNIA) ss.
COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO)

I, JULIE L. RODEWALD, County Clerk of the above entitled County, and Ex-Officio Clerk of the Board of Supervisors thereof, do hereby certify the foregoing to be a full, true and correct copy of an order entered in the minutes of said Board of Supervisors, and now remaining of record in my office.

Witness, my hand and seal of said Board of Supervisors this 19th day of March, 2014.

JULIE L. RODEWALD,
County Clerk and Ex-Officio Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

By: 
Deputy Clerk

RESOLUTION NO. 08-2015

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CAMBRIA
COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT DECLARING A STATE OF
EMERGENCY BASED UPON THE RISK OF A CATASTROPHIC FIRE AND
REQUESTING THE COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO BOARD OF
SUPERVISORS TO DECLARE A LOCAL EMERGENCY PURSUANT TO
GOVERNMENT CODE SECTIONS 8630 ET. SEQ.**

WHEREAS, catastrophic wildfires continue to threaten lives, property, and the natural resources of the state of California; and

WHEREAS, on January 17, 2014 the Governor of the State of California declared a drought emergency for the entire state, and on January 30, 2014 the Cambria Community Services District declared a State 3 Water Shortage Condition and severe drought conditions continue to impact the State and the Cambria community; and

WHEREAS, on March 17, 2015 the San Luis Obispo County Grand Jury issued a report that concluded that Cambria faces a severe fire threat due to a combination of environmental, geographical and demographic factors; and

WHEREAS, significant fire threat is no longer limited to a season, but is ongoing throughout the year due to the multi-year drought, increasing fire suppression costs and a reduction in funding slated for fire prevention projects; and

WHEREAS, Cambria is located in a 3200-acre native Monterey Pine forest that is riddled with thousand of dead trees, and it has been estimated that 30% to 40% of the overall forest is either dead or dying and in some stands of trees as many as 70% of the trees are dead or dying; and

WHEREAS, Cambria's development is characterized by small lots, narrow winding streets and steep hillside building sites creating a scenario for rapid fire spread and difficult community evacuation; and

WHEREAS, Cambria has limited water resources and its water delivery system infrastructure is aging and subject to service interruptions; and

WHEREAS, the area in and around Cambria is serviced with overhead electrical powerlines at risk to high winds and falling trees, elevating the threat of fire ignition, and Cambria's relative isolation and limited fire suppression resources, with back-up and mutual aid response at least twenty minutes away, create a scenario for initial firefighting crews to be overwhelmed and unable to stop a fire from rapidly progressing through the forest; and

WHEREAS, there has been no significant fire in Cambria for the past 70 years, which has resulted in significant accumulations of highly flammable ground litter and ladder fuels; and

WHEREAS, the situation in Cambria has been characterized as extreme and borderline dangerous by fire experts with conditions similar to the 1991 Oakland East Bay Hills Fire and the 1987 Pebble Beach Morse Fire; and

WHEREAS, much of the Monterey Pine forest surrounding Cambria is outside of the jurisdictional boundaries of the Cambria Community Services District, while the greatest threat to life and property is located within the District; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors of the Cambria Community Services District believes it is necessary for immediate measures to be taken to prevent imminent catastrophic wildfires.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Directors of the Cambria Community Service District as follows:

1. The Board of Directors hereby declares that there is state of emergency in Cambria due to the extreme risk of a catastrophic fire and directs the General Manager and Fire Chief to take any and all necessary steps to plan and coordinate with County, State and Federal emergency management agencies to protect the community against this risk of fire.
2. The San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors is requested to immediately declare a local emergency pursuant to the authority and procedures contained in Government Code Sections 8630 et seq. and to take an active role at the County level to provide for the prevention and maintenance work required to mitigate the ongoing and increasing risk of a catastrophic fire in Cambria.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 26th day of March, 2015.

Gail Robinette, President
Board of Directors

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Monique Madrid, District Clerk

Timothy J. Carmel, District Counsel