



May 14, 2024

Board of Directors  
Ventura County Fire Protection District  
800 South Victoria Avenue  
Ventura, CA 93009

**SUBJECT:**

Approval of Participation in, and Ratification of Acceptance of \$212,000 from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's California Climate Investments Wildfire Prevention Program Grant Awarded to the Ventura Regional Fire Safe Council for, the Ventura County Education and Fuels Mitigation Initiative Project.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. Approve participation in and ratify acceptance of \$212,000 from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's (CAL FIRE) California Climate Investments (CCI) Wildfire Prevention Program grant awarded to the Ventura Regional Fire Safe Council (VRFSC) (Exhibit 1) for, the Ventura County Education and Fuels Mitigation Initiative Project.

**REASON FOR RATIFICATION:**

CAL FIRE announced the state's awards for the 2023 CCI Fire Prevention Program in late December 2023, with the formal release of grant agreements to awardees in February. The narrow window did not allow the Fire District adequate time to collaborate with VRFSC, the host of the award, and receive formal Board approval to accept the grant funds as a sub-recipient. Therefore, the Fire District petitioned the County Executive Office and received approval to participate in and accept the sub-receipt award without formal Board approval in order to meet the late February deadline.

**FISCAL/MANDATES IMPACT:**

Mandatory:	No
Source of Funding:	CAL FIRE CCI
Funding Match Required:	None
Impact on Other Departments:	None

Summary of Revenues and Cost:	<u>FY 2023-24</u>	<u>FY 2024-25</u>
Revenues:	\$ 0	\$ 53,000
Costs:		
Direct – Dept.	\$ 0	\$ 53,000
Indirect – Count CAP	\$ 0	\$ 0
Direct	\$ 0	\$ 0
Total Costs:	\$ 0	\$ 53,000
Net Costs:	\$ 0	\$ 0

<b>Current FY 2023-24 Budget Projection for the Fire District - BU 2721</b>				
	Adopted Budget	Adjusted Budget	Projected Budget	Estimated Savings/(Deficit)
Appropriations	185,804,176	215,892,141	209,761,998	6,130,143
Revenue	195,536,454	202,489,153	220,414,426	17,925,273
Net Cost	(9,732,278)	13,402,988	(10,652,428)	24,055,416

Sufficient appropriations and revenues have been included in FY 2024-25 Budget to fund this award.

### **STRATEGIC PLAN:**

This item contributes to the Board of Supervisors' (Board's) 2024–2027 strategic priority of providing Healthy, Safe, and Resilient Communities. The grant award will be used to purchase equipment, supplies, and staffing costs for community education and vegetation chipping events. The Fire District promotes the prevention of wildfires by engaging and empowering Ventura County's most vulnerable populations in high-fire-risk communities.

### **DISCUSSION:**

The Fire District's portion of the project implementation is for vegetation modification projects before a wildfire occurs. Although the Fire District has a multi-faceted wildfire prevention and education program, collaboration with regional stakeholders and utilizing science-based mitigation methodologies for fire hazard reduction and proven education strategies will enhance our ability to suppress and reduce the effects on life, property, and the environment throughout the jurisdiction.

The lead agency for this award is VRFSC, which received an aggregate total award of \$2,938,615 to fund the Ventura County Education and Fuels Mitigation Initiative. The intent of the initiative is to engage and empower Ventura County's most vulnerable populations in high-fire-risk communities and create long-term mitigation from the effects of wildfire. This will be accomplished through the adoption of three innovative

interventions in the fields of education, FireWise development, and fuel treatments. The Fire District is participating as a sub-receipt, and our portion of the award is \$212,000, which will be paid out over a 4-year period, approximately \$53,000 per year for reimbursement for vegetation modification projects and community vegetation chipping events. There is no required cost share. Although this is a five-year grant, the first year will be used for project planning and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) compliance, which needs to be completed before any ground-disturbing activities take place.

Additionally, through the Fire District's collaboration and project implementation, this project will expand community engagement and benefit adjacent stakeholders by mitigating and educating the region about wildfires. The CAL FIRE CCI Wildfire Prevention Program award will positively impact the region for the next five years, which is the period of performance. We ask that your Board ratify the Fire District's acceptance of \$212,000 as a sub-recipient of the grant and approve its participation in the initiative.

This letter has been reviewed by the County Executive Office, the Auditor-Controller's Office, and County Counsel. If you have any questions, I may be contacted at (805) 389-9704 or call Tom Kasper, Business Services Bureau Manager, at (805) 389-9764.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DL' followed by a long horizontal line.

DUSTIN GARDNER  
Fire Chief

DG/TK/GF:lgf

Attachments: Exhibit 1 – CAL FIRE CCI Wildfire Prevention Grant Agreement