



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

AGENDA REQUEST & STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: September 27, 2023

SUBJECT: Request for approval of two grant proposals for the Central Oregon Landscape Resiliency Project and a Community Wildfire Defense Grant

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

Move approval of the submittal of proposals for a Central Oregon Landscape Resiliency Project Grant and a Community Wildfire Defense Grant.

BACKGROUND AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

Grant for the Central Oregon Landscape Resiliency Project

The Landscape Resiliency grant program is funded from Senate Bill 762 and administered by the Oregon Department of Forestry. In 2022, the Central Oregon Landscape Resiliency Project (COLRP) was awarded \$5.8 million which was distributed to 16 partner organizations throughout Central Oregon. That agreement ended in June 2023. A new proposal for the second round of LRP funding closed on September 1, 2023. COLRP requested \$7.2 million for distribution to 19 partners involving a total of 20,888 acres.

The Deschutes County Natural Resource Department is requesting \$1.25 million in funding for two private landowners, one community (Squaw Creek Estates) and 1,639 acres of land owned by Deschutes County for a total of 2,274 acres of treatment. Although the COLRP funding request would be the lion's share of the available funding, we want to show that the Central Oregon Landscape Resiliency Project has the capacity to get the work done and our request is scalable based on funding and priorities.

The Central Oregon Shared Stewardship Alliance has applied for this grant on behalf on the 19 partners.

Community Wildfire Defense Grant

Roads maintained by Deschutes County are used for hundreds of thousands of vehicle trips throughout the year. During wildfire season, County-owned and -maintained roads serve as critical evacuation and transportation routes. Reducing fire risk along these routes will greatly improve evacuation procedures and first responder needs. Using the "Wildfire Crisis Strategy," the USDA Forest Service has identified Central Oregon as one of ten landscapes in the West to invest funding with partner organizations to reduce wildfire risk. Underserved communities such as La Pine have been identified as areas of high fire risk. The Deschutes County Road Department in conjunction with the Natural Resource Department is requesting \$348,000 to increase the pace and scale of vegetation management on rights of way. Funding would be used for contractual services and a new masticator head for brush removal.

The Community Wildfire Defense grant will be applied for by the Oregon Department of Forestry on behalf of various Central Oregon counties, including Deschutes County.

BUDGET IMPACTS:

These proposals have not been budgeted because they have not been awarded. If awarded, they will result in revenue to the Road and Natural Resource Departments.

For the Central Oregon Landscape Resiliency grant, the required 25% match would come from US Forest Service Wildfire Crisis Strategy funding and, if needed, up to \$960,000 from the Bureau of Land Management.

For the Community Wildfire Defense grant, the Road Department would provide in-kind matching funds of \$100,000 per year over five years by conducting brush mowing and herbicide treatments in conjunction with fuel removal treatments along roads identified by the project.

ATTENDANCE:

Chris Doty

Kevin Moriarty