



MEMORANDUM

MEETING TYPE: Board of County Commissioners Regular Meeting

MEETING DATE: Oct 8, 2024

ITEM NAME: JAJB FRWRM Grant Letter of Support

SUBMITTED BY: Ross Hallihan, Mitigation & Planning Specialist

SUMMARY: Jason Wilcox of JAJB Properties LLC. Is requesting a letter of support from the BOCC to apply for a FRWRM grant. This grant would fund wildfire fuel reduction work on several agricultural ranches along County Road 358.

RECOMMENDATION: I fully recommend their proposal to the Board of County Commissioners for consideration of a letter of support.

BACKGROUND:

Jason Wilcox of JAJB Properties, LLC is requesting a letter of support from the county commissioners in order to apply for the Colorado Forest Service’s Forest Restoration & Wildfire Risk Mitigation grant. This grant is aimed at furthering fuel reduction efforts on several agricultural ranches near County Road 358 (Bear Creek Road).

- JAJB Properties LLC has applied for and received a FRWRM grant in the 2022/2023 grant cycle, leading to fuel reduction projects across several agricultural ranches in Huerfano County.
 - 52.5 Acres completed and reimbursed by CSFS
 - 12.5 acres in progress (Estimated about 70% complete)
 - 52 acres in progress (Estimated about 45% completed)
- The current application is to perform fuel reduction on 100 acres, building on and chaining to work in existing project sites.
- Jason has used his brother’s company: HCTI as the contractor to complete work across the project sites. HCTI will carry out the work outlined in the current application.

Fuel reduction projects address high density pinon-juniper forest on and around mesas South of CR 358.

- Creating fuel breaks in hard to access properties/terrain
- Fuel Reduction opens up access for cattle, who in turn can control grass fuels.

- “Patches” of trees and meadows are more attractive to wildlife like elk.

Previous and ongoing fuel treatments make use of the forest byproducts produced in fuel reduction.

- Mature trees that are cut down are rendered into firewood.
- Young trees have been recovered as transplant trees for landscaping.
- Slash has been taken to a novel carbon sequestration experiment site

The proposed project that this FRWRM grant will fund helps to reduce wildfire risk to CR 358, protect nearby communities like River Ridge Ranch, creates a “fuel break” to curtail larger wildfires moving through the landscape and protects important agricultural land used for cattle grazing. It is inline with the Community Wildfire Protection Plan of the La Veta Fire Protection District and addresses concerns of life safety and infrastructure and property protection held by the office of Emergency Management.

BOARD ACTION TAKEN:

APPROVED

DENIED

OTHER

SIGNATURE OF THE CHAIR: _____

NOTES: