



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

CITY HALL

CITY OF SONORA 94 N. WASHINGTON STREET, SONORA, CA 95370 P: (209) 532-4541

SERVICE, INNOVATION, INTEGRITY, COLLABORATION, RESPECT, LEADERSHIP

DATE: July 21, 2025

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

FROM: Tyler Summersett, Community Development Director

SUBJECT: Receive a Presentation from Adam Frese, Westside Forestry Consulting, Outlining the Recommended Fuel Treatments for Dragoon Gulch as part of a CalFire Funded Wildfire Protection Project in Partnership with the Firesafe Council and Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District (RCD).

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive a Presentation from Westside Forestry Consulting on Recommended Treatments for Dragoon Gulch and Consider Giving Direction to Project Partners on the Preferred Fuel Treatment for Dragoon Gulch Trail Network.

BACKGROUND:

Dragoon Gulch is a vital community resource that is one of the gems of the City. The area is nearly a hundred acres with approximately 4 miles of natural surface and paved trails available. This oak studded woodland is centrally located and widely appreciated by surrounding neighbors, visitors and those coming to and through the downtown, in addition to cross country participants at Sonora High and local mountain bike club Sonora MTB. The City has a caretaker who helps manage and maintain the area and an agreement with Columbia College to utilize the area for student training and development.

DISCUSSION / ANALYSIS:

The Dragoon Fuels Reduction is a 90-acre project in the interface of the Local Responsibility Area (City of Sonora) and the State Responsibility Area. Dragoon Fuels Reduction is located approximately half in the City of Sonora, including City-owned and private property, and half in the surrounding SRA. The Dragoon Gulch area is high wildfire risk for wildfire ignition and the greatest risk in the City of Sonora. The project has three treatment components—maintenance/mastication of the existing fire break/dozer line that was constructed to protect Sonora during the 2021 Washington Fire; a 17 acre, approximately 200 feet wide Shaded Fuel Break along Dragoon Circle/Ponderosa Lane/Cottage Court to protect those homes and the Sonora Knolls Subdivision; and fuels reduction, mainly mastication, along the ridge from the edge of the dozer line to Race Track Road. Mastication treatment is 73 acres and hand treatment 17 acres. The Dragoon Fuels Reduction will provide protection to a minimum of 6,000 habitable structures.



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Project Timeline

Landowner access – In Process/Complete

Environmental surveys – In Process

CEQA (environmental) approval by Fall

Treatment to begin late Fall if all goes well (ambitious)

The presentation before the Council are the recommended treatments specific to the Dragoon Gulch portions of the project. Due to the popularity of the trail network, the Staff wants to ensure that the right treatments are selected protecting both the community experience on the trail while reducing Wildfire risk and improving the ability to protect the City should wildfire threaten Sonora.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact, this project is being funded by Cal Fire and managed by the Fire Safe Council, along with the Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District. Some staff time will be involved in reviewing and approving of final fuels reduction proposal for Dragoon Gulch, but these costs will be covered in existing budgets.

The Project award is \$510,496.00

ATTACHMENTS:

Presentation of Treatment Recommendations for Dragoon Gulch

CORE COUNCIL PRIORITIES:

Fiscal Responsibility and Stability, Infrastructure and Engineering, Public Safety and Disaster Preparedness, Economic Development/Growth and General Plan