

Memorandum

From: Bryan Cash
Assistant Secretary
California Natural Resources Agency

Date: May 10, 2021

Telephone: (916) 653-7772

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Thom Porter
Director
California Department of Forestry and Fire
Protection

Subject: GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION FUND – Department of Forestry and
Fire Protection

EXPENDITURE RECORD FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021
Department of Forestry and Fire Protection – Fire Prevention Grant Program

This Attestation Memorandum documents that the California Natural Resources Agency and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) completed the attached Expenditure Record on May 10, 2021, for the Fire Prevention Grant Program. The Expenditure Record is consistent with the statutory requirements of Government Code Section 16428.9 and with the California Air Resources Board's (CARB) Funding Guidelines for Agencies that Administer California Climate Investments to support expenditures from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF).

This Attestation Memorandum and Expenditure Record will be submitted to CARB for public posting on the CARB website: California Air Resources Board California Climate Investments. Questions on this Attestation Memorandum or Expenditure Record may be directed to Daniel Berlant, CAL FIRE Assistant Deputy Director of Wildfire Planning & Engineering, Fire Engineering, and Investigations at (916) 223-3576, Daniel.Berlant@fire.ca.gov.

Attachment

Signed:



5/9/2021

Bryan Cash, Assistant Secretary
California Natural Resources Agency



5/9/2021

Thom Porter, Director
California Department of Forestry and
Fire Protection

Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund: Expenditure Record

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
Fire Prevention Grant Program

Authorizing legislation: Item 3540-101-3228 of SB 85, Committee on the Budget, Budget Act of 2020 (Chapter 14, Statutes of 2020)

Element (1) A description of each expenditure to be made by the administering agency pursuant to the appropriation.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Agency that will administer funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Fire Prevention Grants Program.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Amount of expenditure and appropriation reference	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Per appropriation 3540-101-3228, the expenditure is up to \$50,000.000 for grants focused on Fire Prevention activities that will reduce greenhouse gases (GHG).
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Estimated amount of expenditures for administering agency administrative costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ There are no state agency administrative costs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ If applicable, identify laws or regulations that govern how funds will be used	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ SB 85 (Chapter 14, Statutes of 2020), establishes the sum of \$50,000,000 shall be appropriated from GGRF in the annual Budget Act of 2020, to CAL FIRE for fire prevention programs and projects that reduce GHG emissions caused by uncontrolled wildfires.▪ AB 1532 (Pérez, Chapter 807, Statutes of 2012), Senate Bill (SB) 535 (de León, Chapter 830, Statutes of 2012), SB 1018 (Budget and Fiscal Review Committee, Chapter 39, Statutes of 2012), SB 862 (Budget and Fiscal Review Committee, Chapter 36, Statutes of 2014), and AB 1550 (Gomez, Chapter 369, Statutes of 2016) provide the general framework for how the auction proceeds will be administered to further the purposes of AB 32.▪ AB 398 (E. Garcia, Chapter 135, Statutes of 2017) prioritized Fire Prevention for expenditures from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continuation of existing Expenditure Record 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This fiscal year’s appropriation will support a continuing program that will fund the same types of fire prevention projects that have been funded under existing Expenditure Record (FY 2019-20).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project type(s) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hazardous Fuel Reduction/Removal of Dead and Dying Trees ▪ Fire Prevention Public Education ▪ Fire Prevention Planning ▪ Defensible Space Inspections
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Describe the projects and/or measures that will be eligible for funding 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Hazardous Fuel Reduction/Removal of Dead and Dying Trees:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Vegetation clearance in critical locations to reduce wildfire intensity and rate of spread. ▪ Creation or maintenance of fuel breaks in strategic locations, as identified in CAL FIRE Unit Fire Plans, a Community Wildfire Protection Plan and Community Wildfire Prevention & Mitigation Report or similar strategic planning document. ▪ Removing ladder fuels to reduce the risk of crown fires. ▪ Creation of community level fire prevention programs, such as community chipping days, roadside chipping, and green waste bin programs. ▪ Elective tree removal (thinning) to improve forest health to withstand wildfire. ▪ Modification of vegetation adjacent to roads to provide for safer ingress and egress of evacuating residents and responding emergency personnel. ▪ Reduction of fuel loading around critical firefighting infrastructure, including, but not limited to, fire hydrants, water drafting locations, and staging areas. ▪ Removing dead and dying trees. ▪ Must support local efforts to remove dead and dying trees that pose a threat to public health and safety. ▪ Projects to improve compliance with defensible space requirements as required by Public Resources Code Section 4291 through increased inspections and assistance for low-income residents. 2. <i>Fire Prevention Public Education:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Workshops, meetings, materials creation, and other educational activities with the purpose of increasing knowledge and awareness of information that could be used to reduce the total number of wildland fires and acres burned. ▪ To educate the public on wildfire mitigation and risk reduction strategies. 3. <i>Fire Prevention Planning:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wildfire risk or related mapping. ▪ Creation of strategic wildfire planning documents, such as:

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- Evacuation plans
 - Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP)
 - Local Hazard Mitigation Plans
 - Safety Elements
 - Wildfire prevention plans
 - Research to determine standards for structural codes and regulations.
 - 4. *Defensible Space Inspections:*
 - CAL FIRE inspects residential homes for proper clearance to 100 feet which increases the chance of a home surviving a wildfire.
 - Inspections provide education and awareness with compliance requirements to the Public Resource Code Section 4291.
 - 5. *Quantification Methodology Contract:*
 - Contract to pay for the Quantification Methodology for the Awarded Fire Prevention Grant projects.
 - 6. *National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Structure Separation Experiment:*
 - The objective of the project is to assess structure to structure fire spread.

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- Intended recipients
 - State Agencies
 - Federal Agencies
 - Native American Tribal entities
 - Local government within or adjacent to State Responsibility Area (SRA), Including,
 - Incorporated Cities and Counties
 - Fire Districts
 - Community Service Districts
 - Water Districts
 - Resource Conservation Districts
 - Special Districts
 - Certified Local Conservation Corps
 - Fire Safe Councils with a 501(c)(3) designation
 - Other non-profit organizations with a 501(c)(3) designation

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- Process for selecting projects for funding
 - Projects will be selected through a competitive application process. CAL FIRE will give priority to landscapes where projects will have the greatest benefits, such as areas with tree mortality and wildfire threats, carbon storage potential, as well as opportunity for biomass use. These are areas where applicants have demonstrated there is need for treatment, and these areas will be given high priority for funding.
 - CAL FIRE will review full applications for completeness and fulfillment of selection criteria. Each project will be scored against the selection criteria, and the highest scoring projects
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will be selected for funding. Eligibility and selection criteria are found in the Fire Prevention Grants Program Procedural Guide FY 2020-2021.

- Priority Fuel Reduction Projects using community and wildfire risk information.
 - National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) has a long-standing partnership with CAL FIRE on studying damage inspection with and structure loss. They participate in the California Building Code Chapter 7A working group. They are the only ones capable to carry out this study as they are uniquely qualified for this research. Additionally, they are not beholden to anyone. They follow the science, produce reports based on their findings and make recommendations from those findings.
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Element (2) A description of how the expenditure will further the regulatory purposes of Division 25.5 (commencing with Section 38500) of the Health and Safety Code, including, but not limited to, the limit established under Part 3 (commencing with Section 38550) and other applicable requirements of law.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ How the expenditure is reflected in the Investment Plan and the Scoping Plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Appropriation requires that GGRF monies be expended in a manner that is consistent with the three-year Investment Plan. The Fiscal Year 2020-21 appropriation acknowledges the multiple benefits of fire prevention grants that reduce greenhouse gas emissions caused by uncontrolled wildfires, including, but not limited to, vegetation management, forest overgrowth reduction, biomass energy generation, and measures to ensure future wildfires are more consistent with historic regenerative fire regimes.▪ The Legislature should “continue to invest in existing programs and prioritize programs that:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Emphasize meaningful community input in program modifications and project solicitation and design, and fund community-led projects, both community-wide and small-scale.○ Achieve near-term climate and health benefits and contribute to long-term transformation to low carbon communities and ecosystems that are adaptable and resilient.”▪ Encouraging collaboration with local and regional organizations and increasing investment to protect, enhance, and innovate in our rural landscapes and communities. |
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Element (3) A description of how the expenditure will contribute to achieving and maintaining greenhouse gas emission reductions pursuant to Division 25.5 (commencing with Section 38500) of the Health and Safety Code.

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- Describe how expenditures will facilitate the achievement of GHG emission reductions in the State
 - *For Hazardous Fuel Reduction/Removal of Dead and Dying Trees Grant Projects and Priority Fuels Reduction Projects:*
 - By converting trees into high quality wood products, the carbon contained in them does not decay in a landfill and is put to a better use. The GHG reductions result from wood products retaining more carbon than decomposed or burned biomass.
 - Biomass (limbs, tops, and other residues) can be repurposed for renewable electricity generation or biofuel production. By utilizing biomass for energy, these projects avoid GHG emissions from displaced fossil fuel-based energy sources.
 - Fuel reduction treatments reduce fuel loading, thereby reducing the risk of large, uncontrolled wildfires and associated GHG emissions while also improving the stability of forest carbon in remaining vegetation. Projects will require that the best, healthiest trees remain for greater carbon sequestration and wildfire, drought, and pest resistance. While trees may be removed, thinning overstocked stands reduces competition among trees, thereby promoting carbon sequestration and avoiding future mortality.
 - *For Fire Prevention Public Education Grant Projects:*
 - These fire prevention public education projects will provide higher levels of understanding and recognition from the public about the risks associated with wildfires, thereby reducing the number of ignitions of unwanted wildfires. The intention is to have global benefits for reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions by combining projects to meet CARB requirements.
 - *For Fire Prevention Planning Grant Projects:*
 - These fire prevention planning projects will allow better community awareness, and provide avoidance measures to reduce wildfire impacts on structures and healthy forest environments. The intention is to have global benefits for reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions by combining projects to meet CARB requirements.
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Explain when GHG emission reductions and/or co-benefits are expected to occur and how they will be maintained | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Fuels reduction treatments are an initial source of GHG emissions as biomass is removed from the treatment area. A net GHG benefit from fuel reduction activities occurs as a result of biomass utilization, improved tree growth, and avoided wildfire emissions from an expected reduction in fire severity. The time required to achieve a net GHG benefit will vary depending on site characteristics and treatments employed, but is expected to be achieved between 7 and 15 years. |
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Element (4) A description of how the administering agency considered the applicability and feasibility of other non-greenhouse gas reduction objectives of Division 25.5 (commencing with Section 38500) of the Health and Safety Code.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Expected co-benefits, particularly environmental, economic, public health and safety, and climate resiliency | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Fire Prevention projects can take many forms (i.e. vegetation removal, dead and dying tree removal, chipping, etc.) and the specific co-benefits achieved by any forest health project will vary depending on the activities employed. Despite the variation, all fire prevention projects are expected to result in healthier, more resilient forests that provide numerous co-benefits including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Avoiding or reducing the impacts to forests from catastrophic wildfire.○ Maintaining or improving water quality by impeding erosive runoff that can discharge sediments into streams.○ Healthy resilient forests that are more resistant to fire and climate change.○ Well-managed forested landscapes that lessen the risk to life, public safety, and infrastructure.○ Maintenance and improvement of air quality.○ Green and bioenergy development.○ Reduction of fossil fuel-based energy demand.○ Help develop markets for beneficial uses of the material, including, but not limited to, animal bedding, biochar, cross-laminated timber, mulch, oriented strandboard, pulp, post, shredding, and veneer products.○ Creation of new and maintenance of existing employment opportunities.○ Enhanced recreational opportunities and tourism revenue.○ Decreased risk of wildfire consuming homes and other buildings.▪ Improved ingress and egress in the case of a fire. |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ How the project will support other objectives of AB 32 and related amendments | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The Fire Prevention Grant Program will also support other Assembly Bill 32 objectives including improvement of air quality by reduction of wildfire emissions; providing opportunities for community institutions and small businesses to participate in and benefit from GHG reduction efforts via issuing grants to nonprofit organizations.▪ Wildfires emit over 60% of the black carbon released in California annually. The Fire Prevention Grant Program will reduce the short-lived climate pollutant, a specified priority in AB 398, over business as usual. |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Percentage of total funding that will be expended for projects that benefit disadvantaged or low-income communities and low-income households per CARB guidance | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Annual Fire Prevention Grant Program activities reduce wildfire emissions across the state, directly benefiting all disadvantaged or low-income communities and low-income households throughout all 15 California Air Basins. |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Describe the benefits to disadvantaged or low-income communities and low-income households per CARB guidance | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Hazardous wildfire emissions (i.e. smoke and black carbon) impact disadvantaged communities, low income communities and low income households far removed from areas actively burning. By reducing and eliminating wildfires through Fire Prevention Grant Program activities, disadvantaged communities, low-income communities and low-income households will see fewer days negatively impacted by hazardous wildfire emissions. |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Explain strategies the administering agency will use to maximize benefits to disadvantaged communities | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ To help maximize benefits to disadvantaged communities, the administering agency will coordinate with local and regional entities to host workshops that allow the public to provide input on the types of projects that would be funded.▪ Projects that meet disadvantaged community benefit criteria and demonstrate that the project will meaningfully address an important community need will receive additional points in scoring. |
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Element (5) A description of how the administering agency will document the result achieved from the expenditure to comply with Division 25.5 (commencing with Section 35800) of the Health and Safety Code.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ How the administering agency will track / report progress to make sure projects are implemented per requirements in statute and CARB guidance | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The agency requires funding recipients to maintain records and submit quarterly reporting in a format prescribed in CARB guidance.▪ In addition, CAL FIRE will conduct periodic reviews of selected projects. If a funding recipient does not perform in accordance with program requirements, the recipient will be subject to the remedies of non-performance, as identified in the Fire Prevention Grants Program Procedural Guide FY 2020-2021. |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Describe the approach that will be used to document GHG emission reductions and/or other benefits before and after project completion. Include citations for references that support methodology | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ CAL FIRE and project proponents will calculate the net GHG reductions from the programs described here using methods approved by CARB for FY 2020-21 (see California Climate Investments Quantification). |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Type of information that will be collected to document results, consistent with CARB guidance | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Project results will be collected and entered into the Department's CalMAPPER Information System. CalMAPPER records a wide range of information in a database form and spatially, so that maps can be produced and other GIS analysis can be conducted. Information such as acres treated, location of projects, funds expended, solid wood or biomass products generated from the projects, and carbon sequestration and GHG emission reductions will be collected and recorded. |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ How the administering agency will report on program status | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ CAL FIRE will regularly report on expenditures, status of grant projects, and project benefits in reports prepared and submitted according to CARB Funding Guidelines. At a minimum, the reports will include expenditure amounts, current estimates of the net GHG benefit, and acres treated. |
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