



[Home](#) [Detail Sections](#)

Proposal :: CA / Project

Submitted to CSS on Mar 13, 2025

Actions

FY 2024 - 2025 USDA Forest Service Community Wildfire Defense Grant Application	File Name			
	State:	CA	Keyword:	Project
	Region:		Priority:	
				Id:
	Administration Information			
	Funds Requested:		\$6,382,432	
	Match:			
	Score:	Ranking:	Project Funding:	
			\$6,382,432	

1	Proposal Cooperator [CA]			
	Cooperator Organization:	County of Mendocino		
	Contact Person:	Kelly Hansen		
	Address:	501 Low Gap Road, Room 1010		
	City:	Ukiah	State:	CA
	Phone:	707-234-6031	ZIP Code:	95482
	Email:	hansenk@mendocinocounty.gov		

1	Applicant Information [CA]			
	Applicant:	County of Mendocino		
	Contact Person:	Darcie Antle		
	Address:	501 Low Gap Road, Room 1010		
	City:	Ukiah	State:	CA
	Phone (work/cell):	707-234-6034	Fax:	707-463-5649
	Email:	antled@mendocinocounty.gov		
	Federal Tax ID:	94-6000520	UEI:	FSMPK8PJHKP8

Is either the Applicant or Proposal Cooperator an Alaskan Native Corporation or an Indian Tribe (either federal or state recognized)?

Please answer either Yes or No

Is the Applicant an Alaskan Native Corporation or an Indian Tribe

No

2

Provide the expiration date for your sam.gov Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number registration. Note: The UEI# and an active sam.gov registration are needed to apply for the grant.

UEI # and Sam.gov Expiration Date

SAM Expiration Date: 06-04-2025

UEI: FSMPK8PJHKP8

3

4	Project Information	
	Name of the Project:	North Mendocino County Wildfire Resilience and Evacuation Safety Project
	Community Name(s):	Laytonville, Leggett, Covelo/Round Valley
	Counties:	Mendocino
	Congressional District:	2

GIS Coordinates

Ref. Point Name:

Lat/Long:

Description:

4

Area Name: North Mendocino County Project Boundary

Boundary Lat/Longs: 40.000035, -124.003526; 39.889852, -123.110449; 39.489734, -123.117830; 39.492122, -123.429662; 39.433622, -123.523692; 39.436593, -123.821771; 39.687138, -123.804131

Description: Boundary incorporates all project activities

Provide a brief overview and purpose statement for the project, addressing the overall intent of this program to assist communities with planning and mitigating their risk against wildfire.

Brief Project Overview and Purpose

The North Mendocino County Wildfire Resilience and Evacuation Safety Project proposes to (1) remove hazardous trees and reduce fuel loads along key evacuation routes in the low-income region of northern Mendocino County (2) conduct Public Education & Community Outreach to inform north county residents on evacuation preparedness, and (3) create localized Evacuation Plans for unincorporated communities in north county.

The Mendocino County Disaster Prevention, Recovery, Resilience, and Mitigation (PRRM) Department will lead project implementation in partnership with the Countys Office of Emergency Services (OES), Sheriffs Department, Departments of Transportation (DOT), Animal Care Services, and Social Services, and with the support of contractors and/or consultants. Specifically, the County will procure professional services to support (1) hazardous tree identification and GIS mapping by a qualified arborist, (2) CEQA and environmental planning, (3) public outreach efforts at a wide range of community events, (4) development of localized evacuation plans, and (5) labor compliance including Davis-Bacon and state prevailing wage.

5 To complete the tree removal and fuels reduction component of this project, the County proposes procurement of new heavy equipment including a Caterpillar 309 CR excavator with a fixed-tooth mulcher, a Tiger Tractor flail mower, and a tow-behind chipper, all of which will be operated and maintained by the County's Department of Transportation. Additional purchases to implement the project include handheld tools, pre-packed go bags, and supplies for outreach and education events.

The purpose of the project is to enhance evacuation safety and wildfire resilience in the high-risk communities of northern Mendocino County, which comprises 47% of the countys total area and holds a population of over 16,000 people. This region faces unique challenges due to its remote nature, long response times from first responders during emergency situations, limited infrastructure, high poverty rates, and severe wildfire risks which make it a priority for targeted resiliency efforts.

The project proposed is in alignment with Mendocino Countys 2016 CWPP as well as its 2020 MJHMP which emphasize hazardous fuels reduction and the need for state/federal resources in these areas. Other plans that support the project are the 2020 County Fire Vulnerability Assessment, the County General Plan which adopted the County Emergency Operations Plan and Design Element (DE)-219.3b: Identify new evacuation routes consistent with the County Evacuation Plan, ensuring effective ingress/egress from isolated communities, California Wildfire Forest Resiliency Action Plan, and the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy.

Respond with the grant component type that applies to the application (please select only one per application):

1.) Creating or Updating a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) that is more than five (5) years old.

2.) Project described in a CWPP that is less than ten (10) years old. (See NOFO for CWPP alternative requirements such as Hazard Mitigation Plans)

Grant Component Type

This project falls under grant component type 2) Project described in a CWPP that is less than ten (10) years old.

6

For project implementations, an eligible CWPP or equivalent plan needs to be included.

Provide a link to the CWPP or if no link exists, please send a copy to the CWDG Forest Service email at SM.FS.usfs_cwdg@usda.gov. (Include the State/Island/Tribe, project name, and applicant information)

(Note: If the application is for a CWPP development or revision, a current CWPP is not required.)

Include an Eligible CWPP or Equivalent Plan

Mendocino Countys 2016 CWPP has been sent to the CWDG inbox at SM.FS.usfs_cwdg@usda.gov as part of the application submittal process.

7

Please respond yes or no if the community is considered "at-risk" (please refer to the definition within the NOFO). Provide a web link to the verification source. (Note: At-Risk is a basic eligibility requirement of this grant opportunity. If the answer to this question is "no," do not proceed with the application process.)

Is Your Community Considered "At-Risk"

Yes. Mendocino County is considered at risk in accordance with At-Risk Community Option 2. It has a higher Wildfire Hazard Potential than 97.3% of counties in the nation, a 4.1% increase since 2023 CWDG data.

8

Source:

Wildfire Risk to Communities, Version 2. 2024. As reported by the CWDG Data Tool, <https://wildfirerisk.org/cwdg-tool/6045>

Do you currently have, or will you adopt prior to grant award, an ordinance or regulation that requires that roofs for new building construction, as well as the reroofing or replacement of a roof on existing buildings, adheres to standards that are similar to, or more stringent than, the roof construction standards established by the National Fire Protection Association or applicable model building code established by the International Code Council (this is not a requirement for eligibility but determines the source of funds).

Roofing Code/Ordinance

Mendocino County has adopted the 2022 editions of the California Fire Code, California Residential Code, California Electrical Code, California Mechanical Code, California Plumbing Code, California Green Building Standards Code, and California Energy Code. The California codes adhere to standards that are equivalent to, or more stringent than, the roof construction standards established by the National Fire Protection Association.

Sources:

- 9** https://library.municode.com/ca/mendocino_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=MECOCO_TIT18BURE_CH18.04INGE_S18.04.025CACOAD
<https://up.codes/viewer/california/ca-fire-code-2022>
<https://up.codes/viewer/california/ca-building-code-2022>
<https://up.codes/viewer/california/ca-electric-code-2022>
<https://up.codes/viewer/california/ca-mechanical-code-2022>
<https://up.codes/viewer/california/ca-plumbing-code-2022>
<https://up.codes/viewer/california/ca-green-code-2022>
<https://up.codes/viewer/california/ca-energy-code-2022>

Are you planning on applying for a grant match waiver based on the project serving an underserved community? Please respond yes or no. If yes, include sufficient supporting documentation in your waiver request to demonstrate that the community meets the Low-Income criteria. In addition, Indian Tribes, Alaskan Native Corporations, Pacific Island Territories, and the US Virgin Islands.

Grant Waiver

Mendocino County, CA, is considered an underserved county and is eligible to apply for a cost-share waiver. The Census Bureau estimates its median household income is between \$61,737 and \$67,639. To qualify in California, the low-end of the estimate must be less than \$76,829.

10

Source:

U.S. Census Bureau. (2022). American Community Survey. Washington, DC. As reported by the CWDG Data Tool, <https://wildfirerisk.org/cwdg-tool/6045>

10 points. 7500 characters including spaces.

Clearly define the scope of the project, what the project proposes to accomplish, why it is important, and how it supports the Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy and relevant State Forest Action Plan (or equivalent Tribal plan).

Provide a comprehensive but succinct overview of the proposed project that includes basic details of who is doing what, where, and why this is important. Explain how the project is described in a CWPP (or acceptable alternative as described in the NOFO). Specify if benefits to traditionally underserved or marginalized audiences are a component of the work.

Project Description

This project is comprised of three components: (1) complete Hazardous Tree Removal and Fuels Reduction along key evacuation routes in the low-income region of northern Mendocino County (2) conduct robust Public Education & Community Outreach to educate north county communities on evacuation preparedness, and (3) create detailed, localized Evacuation Plans for unincorporated communities in north county.

The project focus area is the unincorporated rural communities located in northern Mendocino County, generally comprising census tracts 101, 102, 103, 106.2, and parts of 108.02 with the most notable towns being Covelo (1,394) and Laytonville (1,152). Encompassing up to 1,800 square miles (~47% of the total county) and a population of 16,128 (2020), northern Mendocino County is characterized by dense forests, steep hills, and remote valleys, with many narrow, unpaved roads. This region is also home to the Round Valley Indian Tribes and the Cahto Tribe of the Laytonville Rancheria.

The Hazardous Tree Removal and Fuels Reduction component aims to enhance evacuation safety during wildfires by removing dead and dying trees and reducing fuel loads along evacuation routes in northern Mendocino County. First, DOT will develop an implementation plan that outlines treatment locations, timelines, and methods, in partnership with a contract arborist to assess tree health and support planning efforts. A consultant will also be procured to navigate CEQA during this initial planning stage.

To complete this portion of the project, the MCDOT proposes procurement of one Caterpillar 309 CR excavator with a fixed-tooth mulcher, two (2) Tiger Tractor flail mowers, and (2) tow-behind chippers, and twelve (12) battery-powered chainsaws. Upon completion of the project, the equipment will be used for countywide fire prevention efforts as outlined in the CWPP and for ongoing maintenance of the areas treated. Fuels reduction work and tree felling will be led by a contracted fuels crew in accordance with the above Implementation Plan, with County staff completing some portions of work where feasible. Treatment methods will be determined by the contractor based on site conditions but are generally expected to include vegetation thinning, brush clearing, and clearing of ingress/egress along evacuation routes using hand and mechanized means, with a focus on tree removal.

The Education & Outreach element takes a holistic approach to equipping northern Mendocino County communities for effective evacuation preparedness. This includes:

- (1) Developing an Outreach Plan to identify key community events for engagement and material distribution,
- (2) Procuring an Outreach Consultant to bolster public engagement at these events,
- (3) Supporting the Mendocino County Fire Safe Councils (MCFSCs) program to deliver evacuation education in local schools,
- (4) Conducting workshops to educate residents on evacuation zones and property preparation, with topics or sessions targeted to the functional needs each community and its residents,
- (5) Providing Starter Go-Bags to help residents be prepared and stay informed about evacuation notices and procedures, and
- (6) Informing the public of community outreach meetings, evacuation planning updates, and other evacuation preparedness information through a mixed media advertising campaign including radio, social media, and print materials.

The overall goal of educational outreach is to build awareness and engagement that empowers communities to evacuate safely during wildfires. Given the regions rural and dispersed nature, the Outreach Consultant and MCFSC program will ensure thorough outreach to all communities as well as schools within Laytonville, Round Valley, and Leggett Valley Unified School Districts which encompass 11 schools and ~881 students.

Lastly, targeted Evacuation Plans will be created for unincorporated northern county communities. This component will focus on mapping evacuation routes and identifying at-risk populations and will generate approximately 16 individualized community evacuation plans. A consultant will be procured to draft the new evacuation plans. These plans will target a variety of rural, sometimes remote neighborhoods with only one major road providing ingress and egress.

- 1) Bald Mountain Rd
- 2) Poonkinney Rd E
- 3) Eel River Ranch Rd
- 4) The lands of the Round Valley Indian Tribe in and around Covelo (census designated place)
- 5) Bell Springs Rd
- 6) Cahto Dr and the lands of the Cahto Tribe
- 7) Spyrock Rd
- 8) Woodman Canyon Rd
- 9) Cherry Creek in and around Laytonville (census designated place)
- 10) Branscomb Rd and the community of Branscomb
- 11) Laytonville-Dos Rios Rd
- 12) Poonkinney Rd W in and around Dos Rios
- 13) Leggett
- 14) Piercy
- 15) Westport
- 16) Whale Gulch

The Evacuation Plans will provide clear, actionable evacuation strategies for residents while also providing an operational framework for County officials and emergency responders to ensure effective evacuations during emergencies.

The North Mendocino County Wildfire Resilience and Evacuation Safety Project strengthens wildfire resilience through proactive fuels reduction, public education, and evacuation planning. Fuels reduction will improve evacuation safety, while outreach efforts will equip residents with critical knowledge. The creation of customized evacuation plans will provide a level of granular, community-specific planning previously unavailable.

The project supports all goals in the Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy:

1. Restore and Maintain Landscapes: Vegetation management and tree removal will protect evacuees, emergency responders, and essential transportation corridors while reducing fire spread, thus facilitating safer passage during disasters.
2. Fire-adapted Communities: Combining fuels reduction efforts with outreach to enhance evacuation awareness, as well as publishing localized evacuation plans that analyze these areas in greater detail, will equip the region with greater resources and knowledge to navigate wildfire effectively.
3. Wildfire Response: The fuels reduction and evacuation plan elements of this project will benefit evacuation effectiveness by improving navigation for County officials and local fire districts during wildfires.

Northern Mendocino County is an underserved region facing severe wildfire risk, economic disparities, and rural isolation. Poverty rates in census tracts 101 and 102 are 27.8% and 34.5% (ACS 2023), with median incomes at just 3747% of the state median (\$95,521) and far below the countywide average (\$67,454). These economic challenges, combined with limited access to essential services, make targeted wildfire resilience investments critical.

The project also achieves goals detailed in the 2016 Mendocino County CWPP:

- The project is among the three Fuel Treatment Methods approved by CAL FIRE as being the most effective and environmentally friendly: chipping, prescribed burning, and shaded and non-shaded fuel breaks (70).
- The project correlates with project objectives outlined in the CWPP including road clearing, vegetation management, and fuel break projects (104-112).

The project also aligns with the Countys 2020 Multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan:

- ma-WF-MC-239: Coordinate with fire protection agencies to develop vegetation management program to remove understory brush, hazardous trees, and excessive fuels around County roads and evacuation routes (xxix).

Applicant Budget [CA]				
	Grant		Match	TOTAL
	Funds Requested	Applicant	Non-Federal Contributors	Total Project Cost
1 2	Personnel / Labor:	\$400,665		\$400,665
	Fringe Benefits:	\$416,127		\$416,127
	Travel:	\$2,450		\$2,450
	Equipment:	\$1,165,890		\$1,165,890
	Supplies:	\$114,800		\$114,800
	Contractual:	\$4,282,500		\$4,282,500
	Other:			
	Indirect Costs:			
	TOTAL:	\$6,382,432		\$6,382,432

10 points. 5000 characters including spaces.

Provide any additional remarks needed to clarify your budget request. Clearly explain how the budget will be spent by line item, sources of match, and how expenditures are applicable and relevant to the goals and objectives of the project. The budget narrative must describe how the grant funds will be spent with specific detail for each grant expenditure. It must describe how expenditures are applicable and relevant to the goals and objectives of the project. A project proposal must also show how the applicant will meet matching requirements or qualify for a waiver.

If qualified for a waiver, you do not need to show funding in the match column. Information regarding matching funds will not impact scoring. Any program income generated during the award period must be accounted for by either: 1) reducing the federal share of the award, 2) using as program match, or 3) using as additive funds to do more work. Program income means gross income earned by the recipient or subrecipient that is directly generated by a supported activity or earned because of the federal award during the period of performance.

Budget Explanation

Mendocino County qualifies for a Match Waiver, as discussed previously in this application.

Personnel/Labor & Fringe Benefits:

This line item includes County staffing costs to manage the grant agreement, procure contractors for services, develop the hazardous fuels reduction plan and community outreach plan, conduct public outreach meetings, manage project activities, and oversee contractor crews in the field. These activities are critical to project success, as they allow the County to develop detailed

scopes of work and procurement documents, assess field conditions for hazardous fuels reduction, and work collaboratively with contractors to achieve the project goals. The budget was developed by estimating the level of effort for County staff based on prior experience.

Please note that Mendocino County utilizes a fully burdened fringe benefit rate, accounting for all organizational costs associated with a staff member. As such, the County has used the fully burdened rates in establishing the budget and is not requesting Indirect Costs as a separate line item.

Staff costs by position, with labor rates and fringe rates:

MCDOT:

Dep. Dir. of Engineering: 712 hours * \$62.23/hr (Labor) + \$59.32/hr (Fringe) = \$86,544
 Rd Maintenance Supervisor: 150 hours * \$43.94/hr + \$43.20/hr = \$13,071
 Rd Maintenance Worker: 450 hours * 31.50/hr + \$30.03/hr = \$27,689
 Sr. Engineering Technician: 640 hours * 41.68/hr + \$34.13/hr = \$48,518
 Engineer: 400 hours * \$45.92/hr + \$42.39/hr = \$35,324
 Sr. Dept. Analyst: 240 hours * \$43.74/hr + \$40.38/hr = \$20,189
 Enviro. Compliance Specialist: 240 hours * \$33.15/hr + \$29.94/hr = \$15,142
 Safety Officer: 600 hours * \$37.79/hr + \$34.51/hr = \$43,380
 Surveyor: 1,400 hours * \$30.70/hr + \$27.73/hr = \$105,174

MCDOT Subtotals: \$206,605 Labor, \$188,525 Fringe

MCSO:

Sergeant: 50 hours * \$69.14/hr + \$115.11/hr = \$9,213
 Lieutenant: 50 hours * \$69.91/hr + \$122.74/hr = \$9,633
 Deputy: 50 hours * \$56.65/hr + \$98.69/hr = \$7,767

MCSO Subtotals: \$9,785 Labor, \$16,827 Fringe

Animal Care:

Director: 60 hours * \$70.14/hr + \$63.13/hr = \$7,996

Animal Care Subtotals: \$4,208 Labor, \$3,788 Fringe

Social Services:

Director: 60 hours * \$96.62/hr + \$93.94/hr = \$11,434

Social Services Subtotal: \$5,797 Labor, \$5,636 Fringe

Executive Office:

ES Coordinator: 235 hours * \$54.24/hr + \$45.96/hr = \$23,547
 ES Specialist: 265 hours * \$44.64/hr + \$37.83 = \$21,855
 Exec. Div. Mgr: 375 hours * \$76.14/hr + \$90.38/hr = \$62,445
 Admin. Analyst: 725 hours * \$45.92/hr + \$54.41/hr = \$117,503
 Chief Recovery and Resiliency Officer: 1,050 hours * \$64.30/hr + \$78.91/hr = \$150,371

Executive Office Subtotals: \$174,370 Labor, \$201,350 Fringe

TOTAL Labor and Fringe: \$406,335 Labor, \$424,581 Fringe

Travel:

Travel to project sites and outreach events estimated at 3,500 miles x \$0.70 per mile = \$2,450

Total Travel: \$2,450

Equipment:

Equipment costs were estimated based on quotes received by Mendocino County in early 2024, escalated 10% to account for inflation and potential price increases by time of purchase.

1 Caterpillar 309 CR with HM210 Fixed Tooth Mulcher (or equivalent): \$344,850
 2 Tiger Tractor Mowers 5120 M with Flail Mower Head (or equivalent): \$308,550 x 2 = \$617,100
 2 Bandit 12XP 12 Capacity Hand Fed Chipper (or equivalent): \$90,750 x 2 = \$181,500
 12 Husqvarna 540i XP Chainsaws (or equivalent): \$1,870 x 12 = \$22,440

Total Equipment: \$1,165,890

Supplies:

Pre-packaged go-bag starter kits, portable cell phone battery banks, general supplies for community outreach events including folding tables, chairs, shade tent, tablecloths, and printed handouts, and mixed media advertising campaign

Event Supplies: \$6,050 allowance

Go-Bag Kits: 500 units * \$104.50 ea = \$52,250

Cell Phone Battery Banks: 1,000 units * \$16.50 ea = \$16,500

Advertising Campaign: \$40,000 allowance

Total Supplies: \$114,800

Contractual:

Expenses include an arborist to identify and mark hazardous trees, a consultant for CEQA and environmental review, a public outreach contractor for community events, a consultant to develop individual evacuation plans, a labor compliance consultant for prevailing wage compliance, and a contractor for tree removal and fuels reduction. All costs are estimated based on actual costs of prior projects within the County.

Given the early stages of project planning, the County has requested an allocation for the tree removal and fuels reduction contractor, which will then be assessed and distributed amongst the identified priority roads as part of the Implementation Plan developed by MCDOT.

Arborist: 1,000 hours at \$150/hr = \$150,000

CEQA Compliance: 1,000 hours at \$150/hr = \$150,000

Community Outreach Contractor: 900 hours at \$125/hr = \$112,500

Evacuation Planning Consultant: 16 evacuation plans at \$20,000 per plan = \$320,000

Labor Compliance: \$40,000 allocation

Hazardous Tree Removal and Fuels Reduction: \$3,500,000 allocation

Total Contractual: \$4,282,500

No program income is anticipated.

10 points. 7500 characters including spaces.

Clearly define how the project will be accomplished, including at least one of the quantitative accomplishment measures provided in the measurable outcomes table. Identify measurable outcomes and timelines (are the proposed activities clear and achievable, goals defined, outcomes measurable, # of acres treated, # of education/outreach programs, planning/assessment efforts clearly described, etc.). Include metrics for measuring progress towards the accomplishment(s). Describe any applicable less quantifiable return on investments.

Accomplishments

The project will be implemented through three primary components: Hazardous Tree Removal & Fuels Reduction, Community Education & Engagement, and Evacuation Plan Development.

Hazardous Tree Removal & Fuels Reduction:

To improve evacuation safety and efficiency during wildfires, the project will focus on hazardous tree removal and fuels reduction along key evacuation routes in northern Mendocino County.

Activities include:

1. Implementation Plan Development

MCDOT will create a detailed plan that identifies priority treatment locations, treatment methods, and work timelines. The department will define specific work tasks and assign them to either County forces and/or contractors based on project needs.

2. Environmental Clearance

The County will procure a planning consultant to lead the CEQA process.

3. Arborist Procurement

An arborist will be procured to support MCDOT as needed with identifying, assessing, and prioritizing hazardous trees for removal within the defined project area.

4. Equipment Procurement

To support long-term vegetation management, the project includes the purchase of an excavator, tractor mowers, hand-fed chippers, and battery-powered chainsaws for use by County staff.

5. Hazardous Tree Removal and Fuels Reduction

Tree removal will be led by contractor(s) procured by Mendocino County, due to the specialized nature of tree felling. Contractor(s) will also lead the fuels reduction work, with MCDOT providing support in areas where doing so would be more cost-effective; for these areas, MCDOT anticipates using the procured equipment and its existing workforce. Final distribution of work between contractors and MCDOT staff will be determined in the Implementation Plan.

Community Education & Engagement:

The project will provide targeted educational and outreach efforts as a complement to the evacuation safety element to improve awareness and empower north county communities to make informed decisions and evacuate safely. The community outreach activities also provide a forum for local residents to meet one another, share their concerns, and identify opportunities for community-led wildfire safety initiatives such as forming neighborhood level Fire Safe Councils.

Activities include:

1. Strategic Outreach Plan

Identify key community events and locations for effective distribution of educational materials and engagement with residents.

2. Outreach Consultant Procurement

To include hiring an outreach specialist to attend events, provide interactive learning opportunities, and distribute educational

to include hiring an outreach specialist to attend events, provide interactive learning opportunities, and distribute educational resources.

3. MCFSC School Outreach

To include an allocation toward MCFSCs existing school program to conduct targeted outreach to the Laytonville, Round Valley, and Leggett School Districts.

4. County-led Workshops

The County will host community workshops to educate residents on evacuation zones, route options, and property preparation techniques. Workshops will be tailored to the needs of each community and its residents and may include sessions targeted to the elderly and individuals with functional or mobility limitations, residents with livestock and large animals, English-language learners or those with limited English proficiency, and Tribal communities.

5. Starter Go-Bag Giveaway Materials

To include providing emergency preparedness items to help residents assemble their own go-bags and reinforcing the importance of readiness in wildfire-prone areas. These materials will be distributed at outreach events, with a focus on County workshops.

6. Advertising Campaign

To promote upcoming public workshops and educational events through a variety of outlets including paid radio spots, social media, web, and print materials as applicable to each community.

1 Evacuation Plan Development:

4 The project will create Evacuation Plans for unincorporated communities across northern Mendocino County, with a focus on addressing community-specific risks. These plans will provide clear, actionable guidance for residents, first responders, and County officials, and ensure efficient and effective evacuations. The final deliverables will improve both resident preparedness and official response capabilities, particularly for remote and high-risk communities.

Activities include:

1. Procure a consultant to lead the evacuation planning effort in partnership with County staff from OES, Sheriff, and County Executive Office.

2. Evacuation Route Mapping

Conduct GIS analysis to assess evacuation routes while considering topographic and infrastructure constraints in each community.

3. Identify At-Risk Populations and Other Community Considerations

Utilize wildfire risk assessments, community data, and local knowledge to pinpoint vulnerable residents and facilities requiring additional evacuation support while considering factors such as livestock needs, elderly or medically vulnerable populations, and topographic conditions and barriers.

4. Developing Custom Evacuation Strategies

To include creating 16 evacuation plans that outline evacuation routes, staging areas, shelter-in-place areas, destinations for evacuees, and other relevant information.

A general timeline across the five-year grant term is provided below.

Months 1-60: Project Management & Grant Administration

- o Oversee project activities, direct staff, and coordinate with USFS, local agencies, emergency responders, and other stakeholders.
- o Complete quarterly and annual reporting.

Months 1-9: Project Kickoff & Planning

- o Develop work plans outlining evacuation safety, community outreach, and evacuation planning activities.
- o Generate scope of work and bid documents for contractors and consultants.
- o Identify priority evacuation routes and mark hazardous trees.
- o Place orders for equipment and supplies.
- o Identify outreach events and prepare training and giveaway materials.
- o Begin GIS mapping and route analysis for evacuation plan development.

Months 9-14: Contractor Procurement & Initial Coordination

- o Solicit, evaluate, and award contracts for fuels reduction, CEQA, arborists, outreach, evacuation planning, and labor compliance.
- o Finalize outreach strategy and event logistics.
- o Continued data collection for evacuation plans.

Months 14-59: Implementation Phase

- o Remove hazardous trees along primary evacuation corridors and conduct fuels reduction.
- o Execute outreach activities at community events and schools and conduct public trainings as outlined in the Community Outreach Plan.
- o Draft evacuation plans, solicit review from local agencies and MCSO staff, and finalize and adopt evacuation plans

Month 60: Grant Closeout

Measurable Outcomes include:

-1 MCDOT Implementation Plan

-Up to 6 Contractors Procured: fuels crew, arborist, community outreach, environmental compliance (CEQA), evacuation planning, and labor compliance

Tree Removal Equipment Procured:

One (1) unit Caterpillar 309 CR with HM210 Fixed Tooth Mulcher (or equivalent)

Two (2) units Tiger Tractor Mowers 5120 M with Flail Mower Head (or equivalent)

Two (2) units Bandit 12XP 12 Capacity Hand Fed Chipper (or equivalent)

Twelve (12) units Husqvarna 540i XP Chainsaws (or equivalent)

100% of identified key evacuation routes receiving treatment

15 Public Workshops

60 Community Outreach Events Attended

10 School Outreach Events Supported

16 Evacuation Plans

10 points. 7500 characters including spaces.

The application should clearly define collaborative elements, including support from partners, agencies, landowners, and communities. A project proposal must identify partners that will be actively engaged in carrying out the project and add value to project planning and implementation, with a description of each partner's role. Collaboration may be qualitative in nature, and the contribution of a partner may be more than the number of partners involved.

1.) Identify partners that have demonstrated a commitment and add value towards planning and carrying out the project.

2.) Describe what these partners and collaborators contribute.

3.) Demonstrate residual positive benefits as a result of collaboration related to capacity, skills, knowledge, infrastructure, or a replicable approach, among others.

Collaboration

The County of Mendocino Executive Office will lead this project and ensure strong cross-departmental and cross-agency coordination, as well as the integration of local expertise. The project implementation tasks will involve multiple county departments, including the Executive Office Team, including the County Department of Emergency Services, Prevention, Recovery, Resilience, and Mitigation Team, and the Grants Unit, to coordinate overall project activities, grant management, and educational workshops; the Department of Transportation (MCDOT) who will lead the fuels reduction strategic plan and tree removal effort; and the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) will provide insight and expertise during the evacuation route planning process.

Additional County departments such as the Animal Care and Social Services departments, will contribute expertise to the evacuation planning effort, providing valuable insight on evacuating vulnerable populations including those with medical needs and livestock.

Collaboration will extend beyond County departments to include specialized consultants for CEQA compliance, arborist services, fuels reduction, public outreach, evacuation planning, and labor compliance. The Mendocino County Fire Safe Council (MCFSC) will also play a key role in community engagement, and CWDG funds will aid in expanding their school outreach program to deliver targeted evacuation education to students and families in northern Mendocino County. In addition, the school-based educational programming supported by this funding will include collaboration with the Mendocino County Office of Education (MCOE).

1 To ensure a broad regional approach, the County will actively coordinate with local fire districts in north county to leverage their
5 on-the-ground knowledge to refine evacuation plans and MCDOT's implementation plan. Engagement with these districts will help prevent duplication of efforts and ensure alignment with existing fire mitigation and emergency response strategies. Mendocino County contains numerous independent fire protection districts, with the north county region targeted by this project including Whale Gulch Volunteer Fire Company, Piercy Fire Protection District, Westport Volunteer Fire Department, Leggett Valley Fire Protection District, Covelo Fire Protection District, Long Valley Fire Protection District, and Little Lake Fire Protection District.

As evidence of collaboration and the overall support for this project concept, the County of Mendocino has received and enclosed with this application letters of support from:

1. Mendocino County Fire Safe Council
2. Mendocino County Office of Education
3. Wildwood Fire Safe Council
4. Piercy Fire Protection District
5. Westport Volunteer Fire Department
6. Leggett Volunteer Fire Department
7. Whale Gulch Volunteer Fire Protection District
8. Round Valley Indian Tribes
9. State Assemblymember Chris Rogers
10. State Senator Mike McGuire
11. Congressman Jared Huffman

10 points. 7500 characters including spaces.

Clearly define the scale of the project, including relationships with past, present, or future projects that, when combined, offer more benefits than when taken individually. Describe the overall landscape and land ownership that the project influences in addition to the defined project area. Specify areas targeted for planning or mitigation. Clearly describe each proposed activity and include details on where they will be occurring. Include the approximate number of structures that will benefit from the proposed action.

Landscape Impacts

The landscape to be influenced by the project is heavily wooded and subject to severe wildfire risk. The locations to receive treatment are the evacuation routes in northern Mendocino County, to be determined by the MCDOT Implementation Plan that will be developed at the start of the grant performance period. The priority roads for inclusion in this project are shown on the enclosed Project Mapping and have been identified via desktop review by MCDOT staff in preparation for this application. All work will occur on or around County owned and operated roads and lands.

Northern Mendocino County encompasses ~1,800 sq. mi. and makes up about 47% of the total county, with landscapes including those dominated by dense conifer and mixed conifer forests, oak woodlands, chaparral, and seasonal grasses. Elevations range from 600 feet in the Round Valley floor to over 6,500 feet in the Yolla Bolly-Middle Eel Wilderness and along the Mendocino National Forest ridges; this steep gradient contributes to the region's wildfire risk, affecting fire behavior, accessibility, and emergency response planning.

Since 2017, wildfires in north county have included the August Complex Fire (2020) which burned over 1 million acres and affected areas near Covelo, the Round Valley Indian Tribes, and surrounding forests in the northern Mendocino region. Additionally, several smaller fires that have occurred near Covelo and Laytonville over the years have collectively burned ~10,000 acres. Mendocino County has also experienced numerous wildfires in recent years in other regions of the County, including the devastating Redwood Complex Fire in 2017, the Mendocino Complex Fire in 2018, and the Oak Fire in 2020, all of which required rapid evacuations and coordination amongst first responders.

Vegetative Fuels Reduction:

The coverage area will include north county evacuation routes identified in the MCDOT Strategic Plan to be targeted for roadside fuels reduction and clearing of ingress/egresses. Treatment prescriptions will be determined by County staff when developing the project Implementation Plan, while treatment methods will be determined by the contracted fuels crew but are generally anticipated to include mechanical and manual treatments such as mowing, weed whacking, mastication, removal of ladder fuels, and other related treatments.

- 1** The intent of the work will be to reduce fuels to ensure safe evacuation routes during fire events, limit ladder fuels that can
- 6** create crown fires, and generally improve the overall safety of these roadways.

Hazardous Tree Removal:

Tree removal activities will be targeted in the north county, with specific locations and the number of trees removed to be determined in the MCDOT Implementation Plan developed by this project. Trees will be identified by County staff and, when applicable, verified by a contracted arborist, and marked for removal.

Work efforts will focus on the most hazardous trees threatening ingress and egress routes, and all removed trees will either be disposed of onsite or hauled away. Stumps will be left in place to minimize ground disturbance and prevent erosion. No slash, chips, or other materials will be deposited in watercourses or other sensitive habitat areas, though in some cases slash may be pile burned, and chips may be broadcast onsite.

Evacuation Planning:

This region of the County contains many small neighborhoods built in remote areas, generally characterized by a main, unpaved access road along with a network of private unpaved roads, unpaved driveways/access roads, and, in some cases, gates delineating property boundaries or driveways. This creates clusters of residents in high wildfire hazard areas with unique access considerations and exceedingly challenging terrain.

Many of the Countys first responders may only have limited familiarity with these areas when coordinating evacuations, creating a highly dangerous situation. In developing this application, the County worked with MCSO, OES, and Executive Office staff to identify these communities and define clusters of neighborhoods which could be served by one detailed evacuation plan. This exercise resulted in the decision to create multiple plans in some areas and consolidate plans in others.

For example, the Covelo/Round Valley community is a small valley surrounded by forested lands and small neighborhoods like those described above. This region has sufficient population and distribution of homes that multiple plans are necessary; small communities such as Leggett, Whale Gulch, or Westport, while still having multiple neighborhoods and access roads, are less populated and more geographically concentrated, allowing one detailed evacuation plan to serve multiple small neighborhoods.

10 points. 7500 characters including spaces.

Clearly define how or if the project will sustain itself after the grant period is over. Describe any plans or steps that will be taken to continue the project benefits beyond the life of the grant as well as who or what organizations are responsible.

Project Sustainability

The project will sustain its benefits well beyond the grant period through strategic capital equipment investments and the expansion of County staff capacity.

Evacuation Safety:

The proposed capital purchases, including two (2) chippers, two (2) tractor mower attachments, one (1) mini-excavator with a fixed-tooth mulcher attachment, and twelve (12) battery-powered chainsaws will enable MCDOT to take on tree removal and fuels reduction activities in-house, reducing reliance on costly contracted crews. To complement these efforts, the Sheriff's Office will store and deploy chainsaws in patrol vehicles and substations, enabling deputies to quickly clear fallen trees and debris that could obstruct roadways during wildfire events and other emergencies.

This coordinated approach ensures evacuation routes remain passable both during and after the project performance period. Similarly, tree removal is a highly durable method of fuels reduction, as many of the trees which pose the greatest threat to ingress and egress during fire events are larger in size and take many years to achieve this size. Removing the highest priority trees will result in safer roadways for many years, as it may take that long or longer for other trees to grow to sufficient size and cause a similar level of threat to these routes.

1 Community Education & Engagement:

7 The sustainability of the community outreach and education components will be maintained through ongoing activities led by the County Executive Office. Lessons learned and materials developed during the project will continue to serve as the foundation for future community engagement. The response and engagement received at different outreach events will be catalogued, as will outcomes such as additional sign-ups for the County evacuation alert system, MendoReady. This information will help County staff deploy more limited outreach resources in the future to the most impactful audiences, while also identifying regions or events which could use additional engagement activities in the future.

Evacuation Plans:

The evacuation plans to be developed by this project will be integrated into the County's standard operating procedures and emergency response strategies and will provide long-term value by offering actionable evacuation strategies to guide future preparedness efforts. The County will collaborate across departments to update and maintain these plans as needed for continued relevance and effectiveness.

Additionally, the information contained in these plans and the evacuations which they support will be communicated via platforms like Mendo Ready, the County's evacuation alert platform, and Watch Duty, a non-profit service which amplifies public information communicated during disaster events. As such, the evacuation procedures and routes developed during this planning process will be leveraged every time there is an evacuation warning or order in these communities. These evacuation plans are also exceedingly durable and will yield significant benefits for the community with minimal long-term maintenance needed.

10 points. 3000 characters including spaces.

Does this project benefit a low-income community as defined in the NOFO? To receive priority points the application must clearly demonstrate and document whether the project benefits a low-income community, as defined.

Please respond yes or no. Provide a description and web link to the verification source.

Does this Project Benefit a Low-Income Community

Yes. Mendocino County, CA, meets the "low income" criteria. The Census Bureau estimates its median household income is between \$61,737 and \$67,639. To qualify in California, the low-end of the estimate must be less than \$76,829.

1 Against the median household incomes of the State of California (\$84,097) and the United States (\$69,021), Mendocino County makes up 73% of the state average and 89% of the national average. In general, Mendocino County consistently ranks among the poorest counties in California. Additionally, according to the CDC/ATSDR Social Vulnerability Index, Mendocino County scores 0.9726 which indicates a very high level of vulnerability.

Sources:

U.S. Census Bureau. (2022). American Community Survey. Washington, DC. As reported by the CWDG Data Tool, <https://wildfirerisk.org/cwdg-tool/6045>

https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/place-health/php/svi/svi-interactive-map.html?CDC_AAref_Val=https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/placeandhealth/svi/interactive_map.html

10 points. 3000 characters including spaces.

Has all or part of the project area been impacted by a severe disaster that impacts wildfire risk and/or hazard?

Please respond yes or no. Provide a web link to the verification source.

Has this Community Been Impacted by a Severe Disaster: Part 1

Yes. Please see Part 2 for detailed information.

1 Sources:

9 <https://wildfirerisk.org/cwdg-tool/6045>
<https://www.fire.ca.gov/incidents>

If yes, in order to receive priority points the application must clearly demonstrate and document whether the project benefits a community that has been impacted by a severe disaster within the previous ten (10) years, and clearly exhibit how the severe disaster increased wildfire risk and/or hazard and was of a scale and scope to have had landscape impacts (please see full definition in the NOFO). Note: simply listing a disaster will not suffice; you must explain how this disaster has impacted the community's wildfire risk and hazard (not all disasters will qualify for points if it cannot be shown they have influenced the community's risk or hazard).

Has this Community Been Impacted by a Severe Disaster: Part 2

According to the 2024 FEMA Disaster Declarations Summary, Mendocino County experienced 13 climate-related disasters since 2017 including eight related to severe winter storms, flooding, and mudslides (two in 2017, two in 2019, four in 2023) and five wildfire disasters (three in 2018, one in 2020, and one in 2021).

Recent and notable wildfires include the Ranch and River Fires (2018), Redwood Fire (2017), North Pass Fire (2012), and the prolific Mendocino Lightning Complex (2008) which burned 54,817 acres, caused \$48.5 million in damages, and resulted in the destruction of a residence and outbuilding that injured 47.

More recently, the community was impacted by smaller fires including the Mina Fire in July 2024 which ignited outside of Covelo in northern Mendocino County and burned approximately 98 acres and resulted in one civilian fatality. Immediately following the Mina Fire, the Grange Fire occurred in southwest Mendocino County and burned ~80 acres near Boonville.

2 Severe wildfires have drastically altered the landscapes of Mendocino County, leading to ecosystem shifts and allowing invasive species to outcompete native plants which significantly slow forest recovery post fire. These fast-growing invasives are highly flammable and difficult to control and further increases wildfire risk in this highly rural region.

Post-fire conditions have also led to increased erosion, flooding, debris flows, and landslides, creating long-term hazards that continue to impact the community well after the flames are extinguished. In Northern Mendocino County, these challenges are compounded by high fire risk, low income, and a rural landscape that limits access to resources, all of which exacerbate wildfire risks and hinder recovery efforts.

Sources:

<https://wildfirerisk.org/cwdg-tool/6045>

<https://www.fire.ca.gov/incidents>

10 points. 3000 characters including spaces.

To receive priority points the application must clearly demonstrate and document whether the project is located in an area identified as having high or very high wildfire hazard potential as defined by a local, state, Tribal, regional, or national wildfire hazard potential assessment.

Please respond yes or no, and provide a description and web link to the verification source.

Does the Project Location have Wildfire Hazard Potential

Yes. Mendocino County, CA, meets the "wildfire hazard potential" criteria and has a higher wildfire hazard potential than 97.3% of counties in the nation. Historically, wildland fires in Mendocino County have burned thousands of acres and caused considerable property losses and the occasional loss of life.

2 On average, it is estimated that a wildfire greater than 5,000 acres will occur in the County once every three years. In the past 10 years, five governor-proclaimed wildfire disasters have occurred in Mendocino County.

Source: Wildfire Risk to Communities, Version 2. 2024. As reported by the CWDG Data Tool, <https://wildfirerisk.org/cwdg-tool/6045>

