

To the Board of Supervisors:

As a former Executive Director of the Mendocino County Resource Conservation District, I can't stress enough the importance of County funding to this local agency.

Similar to the RCD, when the FireSafe Council applies for grant funds, being able to document financial support from the County shows the funding agency that the County is invested in its local council. These funds are then used as significant match for projects that the County has neither the personnel or financial resources to undertake but are critical to residents' safety.

There is no question as to how the County benefits from Council projects: Robinson Creek Rd. vegetation clearing, Redemeyer and Watson Rds. vegetation clearing; the west hills grant application and subsequent work on behalf of the county; formation and coordination of neighborhood Firesafe councils which have also benefitted from grant funding; coordination and collaboration between local fire districts, the Council, and state agencies, that once again, the County has neither the time or resources to manage.

As residents have heard from both the County and the Sheriff's Dept., it is our responsibility to be prepared for the next wildfire, but the County and Sheriff's Dept aren't providing the tools to make that happen, the Firesafe Council is. The residents and County rely on this agency to perform a community service that the County doesn't.

Please fully fund the Firesafe Council. The budget may be tight, but the chance of wildfire is not diminished, and the critical need for the Council's work is not lessened.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Janet L. Olave