

# MARIPOSA COUNTY

Board of Supervisors · 209-966-3222



## RESOLUTION - ACTION REQUESTED 2018-279

MEETING: June 12, 2018

TO: The Board of Supervisors

FROM: Rosemarie Smallcombe, District I Supervisor

RE: Ratify a Letter of Support for the Project Named Southern Sierra ALL-Lands Restoration and Recovery

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### RECOMMENDATION AND JUSTIFICATION:

Ratify a Letter of Support for the Project Named Southern Sierra All-Lands Restoration and Recovery Program. (Chair Smallcombe)

### BACKGROUND AND HISTORY OF BOARD ACTIONS:

A group of partner agencies has defined a project to reduce fuel loads, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve forest and watershed health in parts of Mariposa, Madera and Fresno counties. The project name is Southern Sierra All-Lands Restoration and Recovery Program. The group includes the Sierra National Forest, the Pacific Southwest Research Station, US Forest Service Region 5 forest ecologists, the US Forest Service Remote Sensing Lab, the University of California Merced, the University of Washington Forest Resilience Lab, Yosemite Sequoia Resource Conservation and Development Council, Mariposa County through Blue Ridge Services, Yosemite National Park, Mariposa County Resource Conservation District and Mariposa County Fire Safe Council. The group also benefited considerably from input and coordination provided by the Sierra Nevada Conservancy.

The group developed a concept proposal for submission to CAL FIRE in February 2018 with Sierra National Forest as the applicant. The proposal requested \$19.8 Million with approximately \$6 Million in matching funds. CAL FIRE invited the group to submit a full application for the CCI grant, but we were advised that a federal agency would not be acceptable as the applicant. Yosemite Sequoia RC&DC is now identified as the applicant, but the Sierra National Forest will play a large role.

Since over 29,000 acres of SRA land in Mariposa County would be treated if the grant application is approved, Mariposa County is a primary partner. The attached letter clarifies the relationships Mariposa County will have with other partner agencies. The primary purpose of the letter is to ensure that CAL FIRE

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understands the relationships, particularly among Yosemite Sequoia RC&DC, Mariposa County and Blue Ridge Services. Also attached is part of the information on the Mariposa project prepared for submission to CAL FIRE.

### **ALTERNATIVES AND CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION:**

Do not approve the ratification of the letter of support and Mariposa County may not benefit from the program.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

**No financial impact**

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

**Mariposa County CCI Partnership Letter DRAFT RS 1 (PDF)**

**Mariposa County Tree Mortality Project Description\_Budget revision (DOCX)**

**RESULT: ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]**

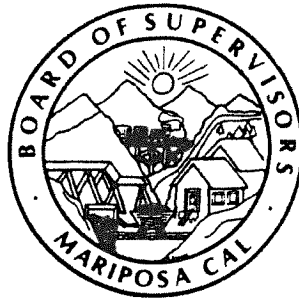
**MOVER:** Miles Menetrey, District V Supervisor

**SECONDER:** Marshall Long, District III Supervisor

**AYES:** Smallcombe, Jones, Long, Cann, Menetrey

# Mariposa County Board of Supervisors

District 1 ... ROSEMARIE SMALLCOMBE  
District 2 ..... MERLIN JONES  
District 3 ..... MARSHALL LONG  
District 4 ..... KEVIN CANN  
District 5 ..... MILES MENETREY



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June 5, 2018

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection  
Grants Management Unit  
P.O. Box 944246  
Sacramento, CA 94244-2460

To whom this may concern:

Mariposa County supports the Southern Sierra All-Lands Restoration and Recovery Program. This project supports Mariposa County's vision of healthy forests and watersheds and thriving, fire safe communities. As a primary partner Mariposa County will:

1. Allow Yosemite-Sequoia Resource Conservation and Development Council (YS RC&DC), the grant applicant and grant administrator, to expand upon Mariposa County's hazard tree abatement program.
2. Allow Mariposa County's Tree Mortality Management contractor, Blue Ridge Services, to provide hazard tree data necessary for the project.
3. Allow Blue Ridge Services to contract with YS RC&DC to conduct necessary hazard tree abatement.
4. Continue to coordinate with the Southern Sierra All-Lands Restoration and Recovery Program partners to identify and develop landscape-level restoration goals.

Thank you for your review of this important project. Please don't hesitate to contact the undersigned at 209-742-1242 with any questions.

Rosemarie Smallcombe  
Board Chair

**Project Type:** Biomass Utilization

**Acres:** 29,100      **Tons:** 15,078

**Project Description:**

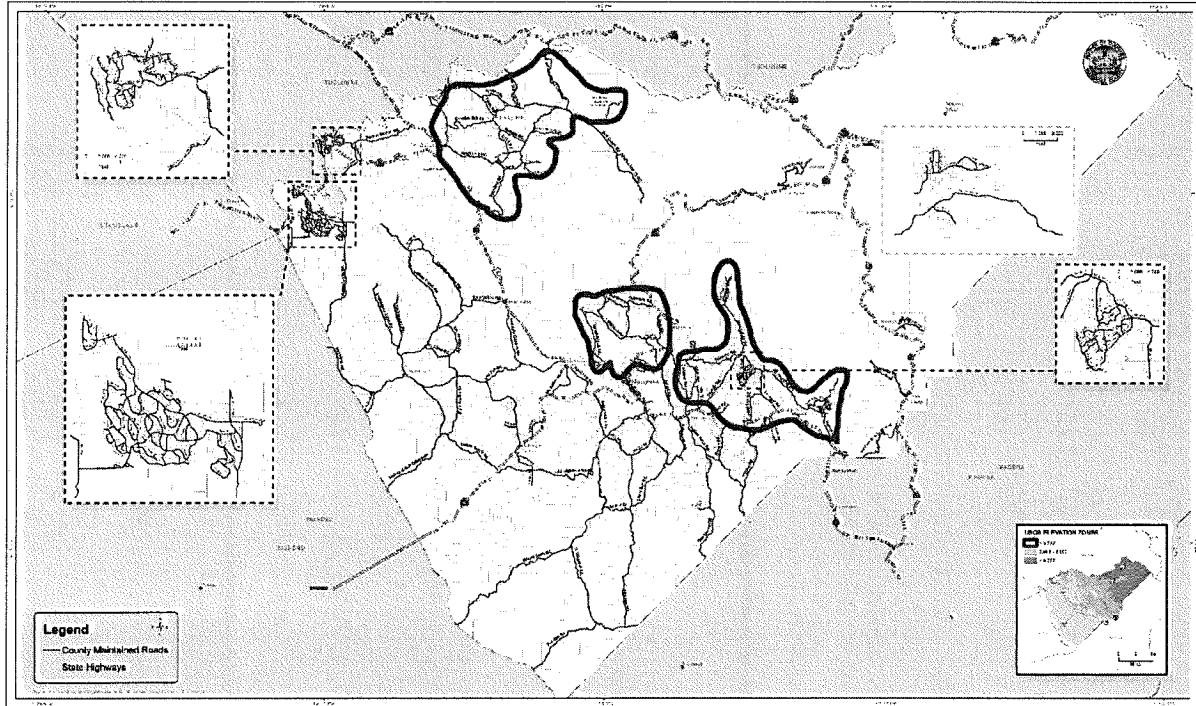
The Mariposa County Tree Mortality mitigation program will expand on the services already being performed in Tier 1 High Hazard zones on SRA lands within Mariposa County. Currently, Mariposa County is only able to fall hazard trees that have the potential to strike public infrastructure, the majority of this wood is being left on the ground to decay. This Biomass Utilization Project will remove the previously downed wood that has been felled and remove standing dead timber from Tier 1 areas that are currently not slated to be treated due to lack of funding. All wood will be transported to a biomass facility and converted to energy.

**Environmental Compliance:**

The falling and removal of drought and beetle-killed trees within Tier 1 High Hazard areas, as defined by CAL FIRE, have been exempted from CEQA under the Tree Mortality State of Emergency signed by Governor Brown on October 30, 2015. All affected landowners will be mailed additional Right of Entry Permits for access rights to remove biomass and will be collected within the first year of the executed grant agreement.

**Project Location:**

**MARIPOSA COUNTY  
COUNTY MAINTAINED ROADS**



**Greenhouse Gas Reduction:**

Dead trees and logs no longer sequester CO<sub>2</sub> and as this biomass decays, slowly releases CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere. This project will remove this greenhouse gas emitting fuel and process it into energy at one of two biomass facilities. Additionally, the removal of this fuel will drastically reduce fuel loading and wildfire intensity and ignition likelihood, protecting adjacent forest and CO<sub>2</sub> sequestering resources.

**Priority Areas:**

The Project will strictly take place in Tier 1 High Hazard zones, as defined by CAL FIRE. Much of the project falls within areas identified as a Low Income Community by AB 1550.

**Permanence:**

After the completion of this project, the remaining and adjacent green trees will have better access to light, water, and nutrients, allowing them to grow faster and larger, sequestering carbon, and becoming more fire and drought resilient. Not only will removing this biomass enhance forest health in the SRA, but will help protect community and firefighter ingress and egress in the event of future wildfire activity.

**Long-Term Forest Management:**

Many lessons have been learned from this drought cycle and the tree mortality epidemic. One of which is that the health of the community and the forests health is tightly woven together. These areas will continue to require maintenance to conserve forest resources and not allow these forestlands to fill in to such a degree, Mariposa County will continue to search for grants, develop programs, and support its partners that assist landowners in practicing sound forest stewardship.

**Budget:**

Personnel/ Labor - \$808,014.92

Contractual - \$3,028,225.08

Other Direct Costs - \$163,760.00

**Total - \$4,000,000.00**

**Matching Sources/ Leverage:**

Mariposa County has hired Blue Ridge Services (BRS) as its tree mortality coordinator. To date, BRS has been working to clear some of the highest priority roads and has expended \$895,927.00. By April of 2020, their estimated expenditures will be \$5,249,302.20.

Mariposa FireSafe Council: \$3.7M in fuels reduction projects in Mariposa County in last 3 years.

Sierra Foothill Conservancy: \$1.8M in forest health and fuels reduction in Mariposa County and \$70,000 in Fresno County.