

impacts of PSPS events on Solano County residents without the use of General Fund monies.

The costs associated with preparing the agenda item are nominal and absorbed by the department's FY2019/20 Adopted Budget.

DISCUSSION:

As a result of PG&E's PSPS events in 2019, there were many areas of the County and in several cities that were left without power, and some unincorporated areas of the County were left without water due to electric pumps, for several days at a time. The first PSPS event impacted many residents who were not located close to an area with the potential for wildfires. By the second PSPS event, the power shutoff area was different, however due to power grid lines and a lack of clear procedures on how to isolate powerlines serving high fire risk areas, many residents still lost electricity.

In October 2019, the Governor allocated \$75 million in one-time funds for state and local governments to support continuity of operations and efforts to protect public health, safety, and commerce in communities affected by a PSPS. Half the funds were allocated to local governments, with counties receiving a minimum of \$150,000 with additional funding based on county size and experience with PSPS. Cities did not receive direct allocations but could apply through a competitive process for funding as part of a \$10 million State allocation. Counties were allocated the funds for OES to assist in preparing for and responding to Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) events. The County's share of these funds is \$463,843.

Activities eligible under the allocation include: 1) Equipment - generators, including connectors, fuel, and fuel storage, as well as redundant emergency connections; 2) Plans - contingency plans, risk assessments, and post-event reports; 3) Public education materials or supplies; and 4) One-time costs associated with identifying and equipping resource centers for public access during a PSPS event.

Several County departments reviewed the PSPS impacts and considered options that would best serve the County as a whole in a future PSPS. The County Administrator's Office, the Sheriff's Office/Office of Emergency Services, General Services, the Department of Information Technology, and Resource Management met and discussed how to best support critical infrastructure and resiliency countywide with a particular focus on public safety, vulnerable communities, and individuals with access and functional needs while helping the largest number of residents possible.

The recommendations that resulted from these meetings are:

1. Three hundred ninety thousand (\$390,000) for the purchase of uninterruptable power supplies and related components for the County's Criminal Justice Data Center to ensure full redundancy. This is critical as the data center supports the radio core which provides radio connectivity between first responders from multiple agencies within the county, the dispatch center, various County-operated law enforcement data systems, the Alert Solano emergency notification system, and emergency telephones.

The redundancy is critical to ensure that emergency response personnel in the field have the ability to communicate via a Virtual Private Network (VPN) even if the internet service for the County Administration Center becomes unavailable.

The County upgraded the radio core in order to support countywide Sheriff, Fire, and Emergency Medical Services dispatching in the future, per Board direction. The core enables cities' fire and police departments to talk directly to Incident Command, the base camp for emergencies, disasters, and large-scale incidents, and with each other via radio, without having to use an intermediary or cell phones, which may not be reliable during a disaster. The core is housed in the data center and is an integral part of regionalization.

2. Fifty-five thousand (\$55,000) for portable generators to be coordinated between County OES and General Services to support critical infrastructure or facilities during a PSPS.
3. Seven thousand (\$7,000) for generator connections at Lake Solano. Lake Solano is frequently used as a staging area for first responders during wildfire events and alternate power supply support is invaluable during a PSPS, as well as a fire event.

While CalOES had their eligibility requirements, staff recommendations are focused on the use of these one-time funds for investments that would be of countywide benefit rather than providing assistance only to a portion of the county. All regions of the county were impacted by the PSPS in one way or another, so it was felt that it is important to try to help all of the regions of the county with the funding provided. Other activities considered included support of facilities that could serve as resource centers for the public during a PSPS event, including the libraries, Corp Yard and downtown offices; development of a Continuity of Operations plan for County facilities; and funding for the Cordelia Fire Protection District (Attachment A) for a variety of activities, including the design, purchase and installation of whole fire station emergency back-up generators, expanded mapping and marking of wildfire evacuation routes; and funding for community outreach and education. It should be noted that a number of the other State-eligible activities are in process using County resources as part of continuing OES efforts.

The recommendation for uninterrupted power supplies to support communications and public safety systems utilizes this funding not for the sole benefit of the County but for systems that will provide support countywide.

While these are one-time funds from the State, the County is implementing ongoing measures to ensure continued operations in emergency and disaster situations. Radio connectivity is key to ensure first responders have the communication necessary to coordinate public safety efforts. Redundancy at the Criminal Justice Data Center where the Emergency Operations Center and dispatch services operations are supported is also critical to ensure a power outage will not shut down operations. All of these activities will support first responders in providing public safety services that benefit the entire community and residents of Solano County.

ALTERNATIVES:

The Board may choose not to accept the allocation or to choose alternate activities to fund; however, this is not recommended as not accepting the allocation would reduce funding available to mitigate the impacts of any future PSPS, and the recommended activities will likely have the most positive impact on the community as a whole.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The Sheriff's Office/Office of Emergency Services, General Services, the Department of Information Technology, and Resource Management all collaborated with the County Administrator's Office to bring forth this recommendation.

CAO RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION