



Legislation Text

File #: 20-836, **Version:** 1

Receive an update from the Incident Command Unit regarding the LNU Lightning Complex Fire emergency response and recovery efforts and current status of state and federal guidance regarding debris removal and funding requests

Published Notice Required? Yes ☐ No ☒

Public Hearing Required? Yes ☐ No ☒

DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION:

The Incident Command Unit recommends that the Board of Supervisors Receive an update regarding the LNU Lightning Complex Fire emergency response and recovery efforts and current status of state and federal guidance regarding debris removal and funding requests.

SUMMARY:

Since the last update to the Board of Supervisors on October 27, 2020, the incident command team has continued to interact with CalOES, FEMA and other agencies in on-going recovery efforts within the LNU Lightning Complex Fire burn area. This includes preparation for the planned start of the government sponsored Phase II fire debris clean-up of residential properties by CalOES contractors beginning December 1, 2020. To facilitate a December 1, 2020 start date, staff sent the County's Right of Entry form (ROE) via mail and, if known, email to all property owners within the burn area who have not yet completed an approved, privately funded, Phase II fire debris clean-up on their property. Property owners were asked to submit the completed ROE with supporting documentation and personal identification in person or electronically to the Department of Resource Management by November 18, 2020. The ROE is required by CalOES for their clean-up contractors to access the property and to remove debris, including burnt vehicles. Expedient submission of completed ROE forms by property owners is critical since CalOES may not schedule their contractors to commence clean-up activities within Solano County until an adequate number of ROEs are submitted.

Based upon direction from CalOES, and pursuant to Solano County Ordinance 2020-1813, Section III(6)(a), the deadline for property owners to submit their completed ROE, or if they choose to opt out of the government sponsored clean-up program and privately fund their clean-up, to submit their application and work plan to the County is set at December 15, 2020. The County will no longer accept ROE's or applications/work plans after December 15, 2020.

Staff will update the Board on the government sponsored Phase II fire debris clean-up and the status of other efforts during the update.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The costs associated with preparing the agenda item are nominal and absorbed by the department's FY2020/21 Adopted Budget.

DISCUSSION:

Significant progress has been made in cleanup efforts of properties affected by the LNU Lightning Complex Fire. Key areas underway are discussed below.

Debris Clean-up:

68 property owners have chosen to Opt-In to the government sponsored Phase II debris cleanup program and have been sent ROE forms. 129 property owners have chosen to OPT- Out and have submitted privately funded clean-up applications and work plans to Environmental Health. Of the property owners choosing to Opt-Out, 111 workplans have been approved by Environmental Health and 6 properties have completed the clean-up process and received clearance certifications.

As stated in the Summary above, under the urgency ordinance property owners have until December 15, 2020 to submit either a completed ROE if they chose to opt-in to the government sponsored fire debris clean-up program or a complete application and work plan to opt-out of the government sponsored program and privately fund their debris clean up. Any property owner who has not responded and declared for either option and submitted the appropriate documents (ROE or application/workplan) on or before December 15, 2020 may be subject to enforcement pursuant to Solano County Ordinance 2020-1813, Section III(6)(c) and could be placed into the government sponsored program for abatement of fire debris remaining on their property. This would not apply to the 100 properties exempted by Environmental health due to the damaged structure on their property being less than 120 square feet with no hazardous materials.

Permitting:

To facilitate clean-up efforts or support agricultural use of the property, the Building Division has issued 45 permits for temporary power pole permits. The Building Department has also received five applications for a Temporary Emergency Dwelling, which are in various stages of processing, of which 2 have been issued.

Watershed Protection:

Staff assigned to address watershed protection and erosion control in the burn area continue to interact with the National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), Solano Resource Conservation Service (SRCD), Solano County Water Agency (SCWA) and the City of Vacaville, along with other agencies. On October 27, 2020, CalFire and California Department of Conservation provided their final Watershed Emergency Response Team (WERT) document to staff. The WERT provides a high-level analysis of fire impacts to the watershed and gives baseline recommendations from which more detailed mitigations can be developed. Staff along with the other agencies will utilize the WERT and their on-going site assessments in development of long-term strategies to help mitigate wet weather run-off and protect the watershed. Additional efforts that are occurring is that chipped wood from all the dead and downed trees in the area is being collected for use on hillsides as an erosion control and other agencies have also begun to collect straw for similar use, once mitigation projects in accordance with the WERT are finalized. NRCS is continuing to meet with property owners and to provide technical assistance on protective measure they can implement on their own property.

ALTERNATIVES:

The Board may choose not to receive the update. This is not recommended since the update will provide critical information to the Board and public regarding critical timelines to submit documents associated with clean-up activities.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

In addition to the CAO's office, the Sheriff's Department, Department of Resource Management, and County Counsel, numerous other County Departments have been involved in the recovery process along with consultation with CALOES and FEMA. Staff have also consulted with staff from other currently and previously fire impacted counties for general information on debris clean-up and re-occupancy criteria and with staff from Solano RCD, NRCS, SCWA and the City of Vacaville on erosion control.

CAO RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION