



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

1600 PACIFIC HIGHWAY, ROOM 335, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92101-2470

AGENDA ITEM

DATE: May 12, 2009

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBJECT: **SECURING ADDITIONAL AERIAL FIRE PROTECTION IN SAN DIEGO COUNTY (DISTRICTS: ALL)**

SUMMARY:

Overview

Over the past decade, the San Diego region has been put to the test when faced with major wildfires. In an effort to help minimize the region's threat from future fires, the County of San Diego has invested over \$135 million dollars since 2003 to improve fire protection and emergency medical services.

The County is now better prepared with two new firefighting helicopters, dozens of new fire trucks, an improved communication system, and a new Emergency Operations Center, and has removed over 500,000 dead, dying and diseased trees. In addition, the County of San Diego spent \$3 million dollars last year to fund a pilot program that leased two Quebec based Superscoopers and one tactical aircraft during a three month period.

In light of the economic limitations facing local governments, the Unified Disaster Council (UDC) recently approved a plan recommending a more cost-effective approach to augment our current regional aerial firefighting assets. Today's action would implement the Unified Disaster Council's approved plan for a supplemental Aerial Fire Protection Program to provide a significant surge of aerial firefighting assets on a "call when needed" basis for this year's fire season.

Recommendation(s)

CHAIRWOMAN JACOB AND SUPERVISOR HORN

1. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to implement the Unified Disaster Council's approved plan for a supplemental Aerial Fire Protection Program.

2. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to include the funds to establish the

SUBJECT: SECURING ADDITIONAL AERIAL FIRE PROTECTION IN SAN DIEGO COUNTY (DISTRICTS: ALL)

program in the County's Fiscal Year 2009-2010 budget.

3. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to work closely with the 18 member cities of the Unified Disaster Council to obtain regional financial support for the supplemental Aerial Fire Protection Program.

Fiscal Impact

The anticipated funding needed for the supplemental Aerial Fire Protection Program would be no more than \$250,000. The Chief Administrative Officer will work closely with the 18 member cities of the Unified Disaster Council to obtain regional financial support for the supplemental Aerial Fire Protection Program.

Business Impact Statement

N/A

Advisory Board Statement

N/A

BACKGROUND:

Over the past decade, the San Diego region has been put to the test when faced with major wildfires. In an effort to help minimize the region's threat from future fires, the County of San Diego has invested over \$135 million dollars since 2003 to improve fire protection and emergency medical services.

The County is now better prepared with two new firefighting helicopters, dozens of new fire trucks, an improved communication system, a new Emergency Operations Center and has removed over 500,000 dead, dying and diseased trees. In addition, the County of San Diego spent \$3 million dollars last year to fund a pilot program that leased two Quebec based Superscoopers and one tactical aircraft during a three month period.

In light of the economic limitations facing local governments, the Unified Disaster Council recently approved a plan recommending an alternative, more cost-effective approach to augment our current regional aerial firefighting assets. The Aerial Fire Protection Program would provide a "tool box" approach by identifying specific aerial firefighting resources that can be utilized on a "call when needed" basis either prior to a forecasted major wind event or immediately after a wildfire has started. The program would include resources such as the Martin Mars airtanker, the DC 7, additional Type 1 and 2 helicopters and military helicopters with buckets.

The UDC's recommendation would supplement the four local firefighting aircraft and State and Federal aerial resources currently in San Diego County. A relatively small amount of funding would be needed to allow for the pre-positioning of these firefighting aerial assets. The funding will only be expended if aircraft are used and any leftover monies could be carried over to future fire seasons.

SUBJECT: SECURING ADDITIONAL AERIAL FIRE PROTECTION IN SAN DIEGO COUNTY (DISTRICTS: ALL)

Although the additional air support will improve fire protection, is it important to keep in mind that this is just one component of the region's firefighting efforts.

Today's action would implement the Unified Disaster Council's approved plan for an Aerial Fire Protection Program to provide a significant surge of aerial firefighting assets on a "call when needed" basis for this year's fire season.

We urge your support!

Linkage to the County of San Diego Strategic Plan

N/A

Respectfully submitted,

DIANNE JACOB
CHAIRWOMAN, 2nd DISTRICT

BILL HORN
SUPERVISOR, 5th DISTRICT

SUBJECT: SECURING ADDITIONAL AERIAL FIRE PROTECTION IN SAN DIEGO COUNTY (DISTRICTS: ALL)

AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET

CONCURRENCE(S)

COUNTY COUNSEL REVIEW	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Written Disclosure per County Charter Section 1000.1 Required	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
GROUP/AGENCY FINANCE DIRECTOR	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
Requires Four Votes	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
GROUP/AGENCY INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DIRECTOR	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
COUNTY TECHNOLOGY OFFICE	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A

Other Concurrence(s): N/A

ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT: District 2 and District 5

CONTACT PERSON(S):

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E-mail	E-mail

AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE: _____

**SUBJECT: SECURING ADDITIONAL AERIAL FIRE PROTECTION IN SAN
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AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET
(continued)

PREVIOUS RELEVANT BOARD ACTIONS:

N/A

BOARD POLICIES APPLICABLE:

N/A

BOARD POLICY STATEMENTS:

N/A

CONTRACT AND/OR REQUISITION NUMBER(S):

N/A