



**DIANNE JACOB**  
SUPERVISOR, SECOND DISTRICT  
SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

**AGENDA ITEM**

**DATE:** September 25, 2007

**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**SUBJECT:** EXPLORING THE USE OF COUNTY INMATES TO CLEAR HAZARDOUS BRUSH (DISTRICT: 2)

**SUMMARY:**

**Overview**

Since the October 2003 firestorms, the County has increased firefighting resources, improved emergency communications, reduced hazardous vegetation, and revamped notification and evacuation plans. Although the County has made tremendous progress to improve the safety of our region, more can be done to manage vegetation.

Through the use of State inmates in San Diego County, Cal Fire (formerly CDF) has camps and several work crews that perform heavy brush clearing and respond to wildland fire incidents. These work crews have proven to be a valuable asset by clearing dangerous fuel that threatens many communities, and assisting firefighters during major wildland fire incidents. The success of the inmate work crews and the demand for their assistance demonstrates the need to determine if the County can play a role in the expansion of this program. Today's action will authorize the Chief Administrative Officer to explore the feasibility of utilizing inmates in County detention facilities to perform clearing of hazardous brush.

**Recommendation(s):**

**SUPERVISOR JACOB**

1. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer, while working with the Sheriff's Department, the Probation Department and Cal Fire, to explore the feasibility of utilizing inmates in County detention facilities to perform clearing of hazardous brush as a part of the County's vegetation management program.
2. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to report back to the Board within 90 days regarding this proposal, including projections for initial and ongoing costs, impact on County resources and operations, and training availability through partner agencies.

**Fiscal Impact:**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this recommendation.

**SUBJECT:** EXPLORING THE USE OF COUNTY INMATES TO CLEAR HAZARDOUS BRUSH (DISTRICT: 2)

**Business Impact Statement:**

N/A

**Advisory Board Statement:**

N/A

**BACKGROUND:**

Since the October 2003 firestorms, the County has increased firefighting resources, improved emergency communications, reduced hazardous vegetation, and revamped notification and evacuation plans. Although the County has made tremendous progress to improve the safety of our region, more can be done to manage vegetation.

Through the use of State inmates in San Diego County, Cal Fire (formerly CDF) has camps and several work crews that perform heavy brush clearing and respond to wildland fire incidents. These work crews have proven to be a valuable asset by clearing dangerous fuel that threatens many communities, and assisting firefighters during major wildland fire incidents. The success of the inmate work crews and the demand for their assistance demonstrates the need to determine if the County can play a role in the expansion of this program.

Prior to the consolidation of adult detentions into the Sheriff's Department, the County Probation Department previously ran work camps that provided inmate work crews to the region. Those work crews had the training and equipment to perform intensive brush clearing. Although this program ultimately was no longer cost effective, there may be an opportunity to accomplish the same level of work at a significantly lower expense.

Today's action will authorize the Chief Administrative Officer to explore the feasibility of utilizing inmates in County detention facilities to perform clearing of hazardous brush. The Chief Administrative Officer would be working with the Sheriff's Department, the Probation Department and Cal Fire to determine initial and ongoing costs, impact on County resources and operations, and training availability through partner agencies, and report back to the Board of Supervisors within 90 days. I urge your support.

Respectfully submitted,

DIANNE JACOB  
Supervisor, Second District

**SUBJECT:** EXPLORING THE USE OF COUNTY INMATES TO CLEAR HAZARDOUS BRUSH (DISTRICT: 2)

**AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET**

**CONCURRENCE(S)**

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

**ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT:** District Two

**CONTACT PERSON(S):**

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**AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE:** \_\_\_\_\_