

Agenda Item

DATE: JANUARY 14, 2025

TO: DOUGLAS COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

THROUGH: DOUGLAS J. DEBORD, COUNTY MANAGER

FROM: MATTHEW DZIUBANSKI, CHIEF BUILDING OFFICIAL

CC: JILL WELLE, WILDFIRE MITIGATION AND RESILIENCE COORDINATOR
DYLAN WILLIAMS, WILDFIRE MITIGATION SPECIALIST
JILL JANZ, ACCOUNTING MANAGER

SUBJECT: DENVER WATER FORESTS TO FAUCETS 3 GRANT AWARD FOR \$500,000 ON BEHALF OF COLORADO STATE FOREST SERVICE (CSFS), DC ACTING AS THE FISCAL AGENT FOR THIS FUNDING AWARD

SUMMARY

Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) requests Douglas County act as the fiscal agent for a \$500,000, *2024 Denver Water Forest to Faucets 3 Grant Program* funding awarded. This funding was secured through CSFS internal agency process to offset treatment costs for private landowners included in the Jackson & Garber Creek Forest Restoration and Watershed Protection Project. The project consists of roughly 270 acres of treatment in dense mixed conifer forest across 120 acres on Schmidt open space parcels and roughly 150-200 acres across 8 private landowners. Anticipated project costs exceed original funding DC wildfire mitigation secured through a *Colorado Strategic Wildfire Action Program (COSWAP)* grant. The project has significant potential to grow with additional private landowners.

DC acting as the fiscal agent for this funding allows for seamless project coordination, contracting, implementation and reimbursement as CSFS already coordinates and implements forest management projects on DC Open Space properties through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). CSFS supports private landowner forest management across a suite of agency programs. All procurement/contracting processes will be run through DC procurement. Project partners met with finance and procurement staff to clarify roles and responsibilities, processes, timelines and expectations. Both finance and procurement leaders support this action.

BACKGROUND

Wildfire mitigation has been working closely with Open Space and Natural Resources (OSNR) and CSFS on the Jackson & Garber Creek Forest Restoration and Watershed Protection Project. The project consists of DC owned lands, the Schmidt property and currently 8 private landowners along the Jackson Creek Road corridor. This project also received funding from *COSWAP Landscape Resilience Investment (LRI)*. This cross boundary collaborative effort seeks to reduce active crown fire potential, protect water quality in Garber Creek, restore Front Range forest landscape, protecting values at risk and fostering resilience by creating healthy forest stand densities that can experience disturbance, resulting in minimal negative fire and post fire impacts. This project builds on roughly 350 acres of forest restoration and wildfire mitigation treatments previously completed through CSFS program funding. DC contributed additional acreage investment from the DC *American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)* Wildfire Cost Share program efforts. Jackson Creek Road provides direct access to the Pike National Forest.

Project per acre treatment costs is high as this area consists of steeper slopes requiring more costly mechanized operations including helicopter operations and more labor-intensive and costly handwork along Garber Creek. This funding allows additional flexibility to complete the entire project as COSWAP funding related operations need to be complete by September of 2027, while the Denver Water Forests to Faucets funding does not expire until September 30, 2029, allowing additional time to finish treatment acreage as needed.

ALTERNATIVES EVALUATED

STAFF RECOMMENDATION (IF APPLICABLE)

Accept the Award Notification for the \$500,000 Denver Water Forests to Faucets 3 funding on behalf of CSFS

ATTACHMENTS

Award Letter

Award Notification