



REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Jason Simpson, City Manager

Prepared by: Shannon Buckley, Assistant City Manager

Date: May 9, 2023

Subject: Agreement for Wildland Protection Services

Recommendation

Adopt A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAKE ELSINORE, CALIFORNIA, APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE AGREEMENT FOR WILDLAND PROTECTION SERVICES FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2023-2024.

Background

Since 2013, the City of Lake Elsinore has entered into an agreement with the California Department of Forestry and Fire (CALFIRE) for wildland protection service to protect the City from unfunded liabilities in the event of a wildland fire within the City that is not covered by an MTZ (Mutual Threat Zone). These costs are for CALFIRE or other resources that may be needed to control a wildland fire, including aircraft, crews, dozers, engines, and logistics. These costs could easily reach tens of thousands of dollars to hundreds of thousands of dollars per day.

Under the agreement, CALFIRE treats the area covered by the agreement and areas in the MTZ as State Responsibility Area (SRA) lands. (This is virtually all the Wildland Urban Interface Area in the City). As such, CALFIRE would bear the cost of suppressing wildland fires in these areas using any needed resources to accomplish this task. The City would only expend its budgeted cost annually to maintain this agreement with CALFIRE. The City last renewed this agreement in 2022 for the fiscal year 2022-2023.

Discussion

The proposed agreement for wildland protection services is for the fiscal year 2023-2024. The cost is based on what the State currently pays to protect its SRA. The current cost per acre is approximately \$36.45, plus a 12.01% administrative charge. The cost per acre is reviewed and adjusted annually. The area covered by the agreement can also be adjusted to reflect build-up or annexations.

The City of Lake Elsinore is responsible for protecting life, property, and wildland areas comprising 1,689 acres of land (as shown in the agreement). Therefore, the agreement is for a total cost of \$68,957.89.

Staff believes this agreement is a cost-effective way for the City of Lake Elsinore to protect itself from potentially crippling unbudgeted expenses from wildland fires and provide a fiscally prudent level of protection to our citizens and natural resources.

Fiscal Impact

The proposed agreement is included in the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Annual Operating Budget.

Attachments

- Attachment 1 – Wildland Resolution
- Attachment 2 – Wildland Reimbursement Agreement
- Attachment 3 – Wildland Budget Plan
- Attachment 4 – Wildland Topographic Map
- Attachment 5 – Wildland Operating Plan