COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"

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GAIL FARBER, Director

ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:
P.O. BOX 1460
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ADOPTED
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

39 August 11, 2015

PATRICK OGAWA
ACTING EXECUTIVE OFFICER

August 11, 2015

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Supervisors:

AUTHORIZE THE CHIEF ENGINEER TO IMPLEMENT WORK TO MITIGATE POTENTIAL DAMAGE FROM THE 2015 CALGROVE FIRE IN THE SANTA CLARITA AREA USING PUBLIC WORKS FORCES (SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT 5) (3 VOTES)

SUBJECT

This action is to authorize the Chief Engineer of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District or her designee to proceed with installation of temporary postfire debris mitigation measures in the area burned by the June 2015 Calgrove Fire (Santa Clarita area) using Public Works forces, at a not to exceed total cost of $1,000,000, and to enter into agreements for access for the work.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE BOARD ACTING AS THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL DISTRICT:

1. Find that the proposed project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act for the reasons stated in this letter and in the project records.

2. Approve the project and delegate authority to the Chief Engineer of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District or her designee to use Public Works forces to install temporary postfire debris mitigation measures at a total cost not to exceed $1,000,000 to mitigate potential debris flow damage to residences and infrastructure in the area of the 2015 Calgrove Fire.

3. Authorize the Internal Services Department, as the County purchasing agent, to proceed with the acquisition of equipment, materials, and vendor services needed by the Los Angeles County Flood

Control District to install postfire debris mitigation measures.

4. Delegate authority to the Chief Engineer of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District or her designee to acquire the necessary rights of way and permits and enter into agreements with the City of Santa Clarita, if necessary, for postfire debris mitigation measures.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

The purpose of the recommended actions is to find the project exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and authorize the Chief Engineer of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District (District) or her designee to use Public Works forces to install temporary debris mitigation measures in the impacted fire area. Expedited action is needed to protect the downstream community and infrastructure from the anticipated debris flows during postfire storms. The storm season begins October 15, 2015. It will take several months to install the temporary debris mitigation measures. The temporary debris mitigation measures can be more effectively scheduled and completed before the onset of the storm season if the work is performed by Public Works forces. The debris mitigation measures will remain in place until the burned watershed recovers.

Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals

The Countywide Strategic Plan directs the provisions of Operational Effectiveness/Fiscal Sustainability (Goal 1). The recommended actions will meet the goal by expediting installation of temporary debris mitigation measures to mitigate potential debris flow impacts resulting from the watershed burned by the 2015 Calgrove Fire, thus benefiting the residents of Los Angeles County and helping to maintain their quality of life.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

There will be no impact to the County General Fund.

Funding for the force account work is available in the Fiscal Year 2015-16 Flood Control District Fund Budget. The estimated total cost of the work is $1,000,000; including $800,000 for installation and $200,000 for design, permits, construction administration, inspection, and other County services.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

The 2015 Calgrove Fire burned over 400 acres in the Wildwood Canyon area of the City of Santa Clarita and adjacent unincorporated Los Angeles County area. The fire has significantly increased the burned area's debris runoff potential. There is the potential for significant debris flow impacts to numerous residences in densely populated neighborhoods below the burned area in the City of Santa Clarita and unincorporated Los Angeles County area. The recovery process for the burned area will last approximately 5 years. The impacts and risks to the neighborhoods can be mitigated by installing temporary debris mitigation measures. The anticipated maximum total cost of the temporary debris mitigation measures, including installation, is $1,000,000.

Pursuant to Public Contract Code Section 20991, the Board may order work consisting of channel and dam protection and temporary maintenance or emergency work to be performed by force account.

The safety of the people of the neighborhoods below the 2015 Calgrove Fire area requires the

District to take immediate action using Public Works forces to install temporary debris mitigation measures above the neighborhoods in anticipation of the significantly increased debris flow impacts that may occur until the burned area has recovered.

On October 19, 2010, the Board previously delegated authority to the Director of Public Works, acting as the Chief Engineer of the District, to perform any construction work that is estimated to cost $10,000 or less, using Public Works forces, provided that the Chief Engineer or her designee determines such work is exempt from CEQA. Since the project described in this letter is estimated to exceed $10,000, the Board's approval of this work, using Public Works forces, is required.

To expedite installation of the postfire debris mitigation measures, the District is recommending the Board’s authorization for the Internal Services Department to proceed with all associated procurement of materials needed for the installation.

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

The proposed project is statutorily exempt from CEQA. Installation of temporary debris mitigation measures, including acquisition of required easements and rights of way for the 2015 Calgrove Fire area, is an action necessary to prevent or mitigate an emergency within the definitions of CEQA and is therefore exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 21080(b)(4) of the Public Resources Code and Section 15269(c) of the State CEQA Guidelines.

Upon the Board's approval of the project, the District will file a Notice of Exemption with the County Clerk in accordance with Section 15062 of the State CEQA Guidelines.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)

These actions will allow the Chief Engineer of the District to utilize Public Works forces for installation of protection measures necessary to efficiently and in a timely manner mitigate the potential impacts from the 2015 Calgrove Fire.

CONCLUSION

Please return one adopted copy of this letter to the Department of Public Works, Water Resources Division.

Respectfully submitted,

GAIL FARBER

Director

GF:CS:yg

c: Chief Executive Office (Rochelle Goff)
County Counsel
Executive Office
Internal Services Department (Gerald Plummer)