



**EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
AGENDA STAFF REPORT**

DATE	February 18, 2025
TITLE	Authorization to Apply for Federal Grant Funds from the United States Forest Service’s Community Wildfire Defense Grant for Fuels Management in an Amount up to \$5 Million
DIVISION	Finance and Management Services
FROM	Katie Dignan, Assistant Finance Officer Deborah Spaulding, Assistant General Manager of Finance and Management Services
APPROVED	Sabrina Landreth, General Manager 

RECOMMENDATION

The General Manager recommends that the Board of Directors of the East Bay Regional Park District authorize a grant application to the United States Forest Service’s Community Wildfire Defense Fund in an amount not to exceed \$5 million.

BACKGROUND

The purpose of the Community Wildfire Defense Grant (CWDG) is to assist at-risk local communities and Indian Tribes with planning for and mitigating against the risk created by wildfire. There are two primary project types for which the grant provides funding: the development and revising of Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP), and the implementation of projects described in a CWPP that is less than ten years old. Communities that request funding for mitigation projects must have a CWPP or FEMA-approved hazard mitigation plan in place. The East Bay Regional Park District’s (Park District) Local Hazard Mitigation Plan meets this requirement as well as our Wildfire Hazard Reduction and Resource Management Plan (WHRRMP). The East Bay Regional Park District implemented the WHRRMP with the goals to:

1. Reduce fire hazards on Park District-owned lands in the East Bay’s wildland-urban interface to an acceptable level.
2. Maintain and enhance ecological values for plant and wildlife habitat consistent with fire reduction goals.
3. Preserve aesthetic landscape values for park users and neighboring communities.
4. Provide a vegetation management plan which is cost-effective and both financially and environmentally sustainable to the Park District on an ongoing basis.

ANALYSIS

The grant prioritizes at-risk communities that are in an area identified as having high or very high wildfire hazard potential, are low-income, and/or have been impacted by a severe disaster. The

CWDG helps communities in the wildland urban interface (WUI) implement the three goals of the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy: restore and maintain landscapes, create fire adapted communities, and improve wildfire response. The proposed project helps achieves these goals while also contributing to achieving CWDG's shared goal of fire prevention.

The fuels management project will request grant funding for goat grazing and fuels treatment District-wide, as well as a large-scale removal and/or herbicide treatment of French broom which has become a major occupant of the Park District's previously treated recommended treatment areas that are now in maintenance.

French broom (*Genista monspessulana*) is a perennial shrub native to the Mediterranean region. It was introduced to the United States in the 1800s as a landscape ornamental and erosion stabilizer because of its ability to grow quickly and form dense stands. Those same qualities have allowed this plant to escape from private yards and erosion control zones into wildlands. French broom has become a widespread problem in Northern California because it forms dense monocultures, outcompeting and displacing native vegetation, provides poor to no forage for native wildlife, changes the soil-nutrient composition being a legume, and in some extreme cases converts habitat from open grasslands into shrublands. Under the California Department of Food and Agriculture's Noxious Plant List, it currently has a C-rank as a pest of known environmental and economic detriment. In addition to its impacts on native vegetation and wildlife, it poses a fire hazard risk because of its ability to grow from 3-10 feet tall and live for up to 15 years in the environment. In the event of a fire, French broom could easily become a fuel ladder, meaning that it could transport flames from the ground into the upper canopy of a woodland or forest. Stands of French broom can also increase the intensity of a fire because of the build-up of leaf litter, twigs and stems, and dead standing vegetation. Target areas for French broom removal, as well as treatment for re-sprouting eucalyptus and other noxious weeds, include RTAs in Anthony Chabot Regional Park, Claremont Canyon Regional Preserve, Huckleberry Regional Preserve, Leona Canyon Open Space Regional Preserve, Miller-Knox Regional Shoreline, Tilden Regional Park, and Wildcat Canyon Regional Park.

FISCAL IMPACT

This action proposes submission of a grant application in the amount not to exceed \$5 million. If awarded, funds would be budgeted into a new project. There is a 25% required match which must be derived entirely from non-Federal sources.

ATTACHMENTS

None.



**EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT
RESOLUTION NO. 2025 – 02 -
FEBRUARY 18, 2025**

**AUTHORIZATION TO APPLY FOR FEDERAL GRANT FUNDS FROM THE
UNITED STATES FOREST SERVICE'S COMMUNITY WILDFIRE DEFENSE GRANT
FOR FUELS MANAGEMENT IN AN AMOUNT UP TO \$5 MILLION**

WHEREAS, the United States Forest Service is soliciting applications for the Community Wildfire Defense Grant (CWDG) program; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the CWDG is to assist at-risk local communities and Indian Tribes with planning for and mitigating against the risk created by wildfire; and

WHEREAS, the CWDG would fund goat grazing and fuels management District-wide as well as French broom vegetation management in targeted areas of Anthony Chabot Regional Park, Claremont Canyon Regional Preserve, Huckleberry Regional Preserve, Leona Canyon Open Space Regional Preserve, Miller-Knox Regional Shoreline, Tilden Regional Park, and Wildcat Canyon Regional Park;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the East Bay Regional Park District (Park District) hereby;

1. Approves the filing of an application for funds up to \$5,000,000; and
2. Appoints the General Manager or Assistant General Manager of Finance and Management Services/CFO as agent of the East Bay Regional Park District to conduct all negotiations, execute and submit all documents, including, but not limited to applications, agreements, amendment, payment requests and perform such acts, which may be necessary for the completion of the aforementioned project; and
3. Authorizes the Assistant General Manager of Finance and Management Services/CFO to amend the current year's budget, without further Board action, upon receipt of the executed grant contract. The budget amendment will include an increase in budgeted revenue and a corresponding increase in appropriation for the amount stipulated in the grant contract as presented to the Board on February 18, 2025; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the General Manager is hereby authorized and directed, on behalf of the Park District and in its name, to execute and deliver such documents and to do such acts as may be deemed necessary or appropriate to accomplish the intentions of this resolution.

Moved by Director _____, and seconded by Director _____, and adopted February 18, 2025, by the following vote:

FOR:

AGAINST:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT: