



County of Santa Cruz

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

701 OCEAN STREET, SUITE 500, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060-4069

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JANET K. BEAUTZ
FIRST DISTRICT

ELLEN PIRIE
SECOND DISTRICT

MARDI WORMHOUDT
THIRD DISTRICT

TONY CAMPOS
FOURTH DISTRICT

JEFF ALMQUIST
FIFTH DISTRICT

AGENDA: 5/21/02

May 16, 2002

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
County of Santa Cruz
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

RE: RESOLUTION SUPPORTING ASSEMBLY BILL 2993

Dear Members of the Board:

We have recently been asked to support incentives for fuel reduction projects. Assembly Bill 2993 provides the tools needed to prevent catastrophic wildfires by encouraging the use of incentives for critical fuel reduction projects.

The California Department of Forestry (CDF) has identified nearly 40 percent of the State as potentially flammable. CDF estimates the cost for fire fighting in the summer of 2001 and spring of 2002 at \$109 million. On average, fires burn 148,172 acres in California annually. Santa Cruz County has many communities that are in the urban wildland interface. Assembly Bill 2993 will help identify and develop incentives to reduce critical fuel loads and make our communities safe.

Accordingly, I recommend that the Board of Supervisors take the following actions:

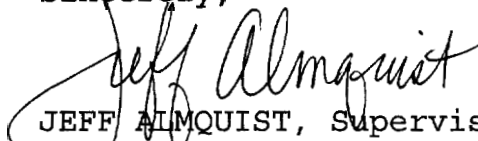
1. Adopt the attached resolution supporting the passage of Assembly Bill 2993.
2. Direct the Clerk of the Board to distribute the resolution as indicated.

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3. Direct the County Administrative Officer to place the Bill in our legislative tracking system.

Sincerely,


JEFF ALMQUIST, Supervisor
Fifth District

JA:lg
Attachments

cc: Assembly Member Fred Keeley
Assembly Member Marco Firebaugh
Assembly Member Simon Salinas
Senator Bruce McPherson
Local Fire Districts

2699N5

BEFORE THE BOARD **OF** SUPERVISORS
OF THE COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ, STATE **OF** CALIFORNIA

RESOLUTION NO.

On the motion **of** Supervisor
duly seconded by Supervisor
the following resolution is adopted

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING PASSAGE OF ASSEMBLY BILL 2993

WHEREAS, Assembly Member Firebaugh has introduced Assembly Bill **2993** into the California State Assembly; and

WHEREAS, existing law requires the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection to make and enforce regulations that are necessary and proper for the organization, maintenance, government, and direction of the fire protective system for the prevention and suppression of forest fires; and

WHEREAS, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) has identified nearly **40** percent of the State **of** California as potentially flammable; and

WHEREAS, **CDF** estimates the cost for firefighting in the summer of **2001** and spring **of** **2002** at approximately **\$109** million; and

WHEREAS, Assembly Bill **2993** seeks to identify incentives or financial relief to landowners to implement fire protection projects in forested areas surrounding urban wildland interface communities; and

WHEREAS, the provisions **of** Assembly Bill **2993** would be of significant benefit to the residents **of** Santa Cruz County and the State of California.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Santa Cruz County Board **of** Supervisors hereby supports the passage of **Assembly Bill 2993**.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board **of** Supervisors of the County of Santa Cruz, State **of** California, this _____ day of _____, **2002**, by the following vote:

AYES: SUPERVISORS
NOES: SUPERVISORS
ABSENT: SUPERVISORS


JANET K. BEAUTZ, Chairperson
Board of Supervisors

ATTEST: _____
Clerk **of** said Board

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RESOLUTION SUPPORTING PASSAGE OF ASSEMBLY BILL 2993
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Approved as to form:



County Counsel

DISTRIBUTION: Assembly Member Fred Keeley
Assembly Member Marco Firebaugh
Assembly Member Simon Salinas
Senator Bruce McPherson
Local Fire Districts
County Counsel

2699B5

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 16, 2002
AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 4, 2002

INTRODUCED BY Assembly Member Firebaugh
(Principal coauthor: Assembly Member Cardoza)

MARCH 4, 2002

An act to add Section 4123 to the Public Resources Code, relating to wildfires.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2993, as amended, Firebaugh. Urban wildland interface communities.

Existing law requires the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection to make and enforce regulations that are necessary and proper for the organization, maintenance, government, and direction of the fire protective system for the prevention and suppression of forest fires.

This bill would require the board *and the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, jointly*, to identify incentives or financial ~~or regulatory~~ relief to landowners to ~~immediately implement fuel reduction~~

fire protection projects in forested areas surrounding urban wildland interface communities, as defined.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: no.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. (a) The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(1) Federal and state resource agencies have identified more than 740 communities as urban wildland interface communities in the vicinity of federal lands that are at a high risk from wildfire.

(2) Catastrophic wildfires are not only a danger to property and personal safety, but also to the environment.

(3) Air quality can be negatively affected for weeks, causing and contributing to severe health problems, including eye and lung irritation, asthma, and other respiratory illnesses.

~~(4) Forest biomass recovered from these areas can be used for the production of green, renewable electric power.~~

(b) It is the intent of the Legislature to establish wildfire protection zones that reduce the risks of fire to citizens and firefighters.

(c) It is also the intent of the Legislature to reduce total wildfire costs and losses while increasing firefighter and public safety.

SEC. 2. Section 4123 is added to the Public Resources Code, to read:

4123. (a) The board *and the department, jointly*, shall identify incentives or financial ~~or regulatory relief to landowners to immediately implement fuel reduction~~ *relief to landowners to implement fire protection* projects in forested areas surrounding urban wildland interface communities.

b) For the purposes of this section, "urban wildland interface community" means an area that is identified by the United States Department of Agriculture and the United States Department of the Interior as an urban wildland interface community at high risk from wildfire and listed in the "List of fire threatened communities in California, Appendix A," issued by the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

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ASSEMBLY THIRD READING
 AB 2993 (Firebaugh)
 As Amended April 16, 2002
 Majority vote

NATURAL RESOURCES 11-0 APPROPRIATIONS 23-0

Ayes: Wayne, Hollingsworth,	Ayes: Steinberg, Bates,
Cardoza, Dickerson,	Alquist, Aroner,
Harman, Jackson, Keeley,	Ashburn, Cohn, Corbett,
Lowenthal, Liu, Pavley,	Correa,
Wyman	Daucher, Diaz, Firebaugh,
	Goldberg,
	Maldonado, Negrete
	McLeod,
	Robert Pacheco, Papan,
	Chu, Runner, Simitian,
	Washington, Wiggins,
	Wright, Zettel

SUMMARY: —Defines urban wildland interface communities and requires the State Board of Forestry (BOF) and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) to identify incentives or financial relief to landowners to implement fire protection projects in forested areas surrounding urban wildland interface communities.

FISCAL EFFECT : According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee, minor one-time costs, less than \$25,000, to CDF to identify, along with BOF, methods to encourage fire protection activities in these areas.

COMMENTS : According to the sponsor, the California Forestry Association (CFA), this bill does not fill a deficiency in the existing law. Instead, CFA intends to identify any deficiencies in the law that the Legislature may need to address in the future.

In response to a mandate from Congress in the 2000-2001 Interior Appropriations bill establishing the National Fire Plan, the California Fire Alliance (a coalition of representatives from state and federal fire agencies) published a list of 1,238

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fire-threatened communities in California. CDF has identified nearly 40 million acres (40%) of the state as potentially flammable, "undeveloped" fire management environments. CDF estimates the cost for fighting fire for both the summer of 2001 and the spring of 2002 at \$109 million. On average, fires burn 148,172 acres in California annually.

According to the author's office, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Indeed, the author's office argues that the state should encourage fuel reduction projects on as many acres as possible sooner rather than later, because pre-fire fuel treatments are more economically practicable than the costs associated with fighting wildfires. Moreover, the author's office urges the state to address possible impediments that may prevent landowners from immediately implementing hazardous fuel reduction projects, including technical, operational, budgetary, statutory, and organizational barriers that serve as disincentives to investment in pre-fire management. In summary, the author's contends that this bill achieves the treatment of all of these acres before they burn.

----- Adoption of the Z'berg-Nejedly Forest Practice Act of 1973 (Act) (Public Resources Code Section 4511, et seq.) resulted in the most comprehensive forest regulation process for private timberlands in the nation. CDF oversees enforcement of California's forest practice regulations.

CFA also sponsored AB 597 (Aanestad) of 2001 that proposed to allow forest thinning through a THP exemption. The Assembly Natural Resources Committee held AB 597 on May 7, 2001. However, this bill substantially differs from AB 597.

Analysis Prepared by : Aristotle E. Evia / NAT. RES. / (916)
319-2092

FN: 0004505