COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 10/22/2024

File #: 24-1444

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Sheriff

Agenda Section: Time Certain Matter

Vote Requirement: Majority

SUBJECT:
9:30 AM - Drought Task Force Update and Progress Towards SB 552 Compliance

RECOMMENDATION(S):
That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Receive a verbal report from the Humboldt County Drought Task Force regarding the current status of drought impacts in Humboldt County and progress towards compliance with California Senate Bill 552.

STRATEGIC PLAN:
This action supports the following areas of your Board's Strategic Plan.

Area of Focus: Sustainable Natural Resources & Infrastructure Stewardship
Strategic Plan Category: 5005 - Implement landscape stewardship through the General Plan

DISCUSSION:
The Humboldt County Drought Task Force was established on May 25, 2021, by the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors. The task force has been directed to explore and develop potential short, medium, and long-term actions for a coordinated, county-wide response as well as track local impacts resulting from drought.

Since its creation, the Drought Task Force has met to discuss local impacts and response and mitigation strategies, providing updates to the Board of Supervisors and the community via formal reports and social and conventional media.

Though the drought in California has subsided, and significant amounts of rainfall have reduced Humboldt County's short-term risk of drought-related impacts, Senate Bill 552 (SB 552) was passed in September 2021 requiring counties to maintain a standing drought task force to facilitate drought and water shortage preparedness for state small water systems (serving 5 to 14 connections), domestic wells, and other privately supplied homes within the county's jurisdiction. Additionally, each county must also develop a plan demonstrating the potential drought and water shortage risk and proposed interim and long-term solutions for state small water systems and domestic wells within the county.

To achieve the goal of SB 552 compliance, members of the original Humboldt County Drought Task Force, with the assistance of staff within task force member departments, have been working with Stantec, a consultant with the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) to discuss how they can provide direct assistance to satisfy SB 552 requirements with the development of a Drought Resilience Plan for domestic well users and state small water systems. In addition to the planning effort, efforts are being made to include public engagement and establish actions and strategies that would be critical to the succession of the Drought Resilience Plan.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:
1100 General Fund

FINANCIAL IMPACT:
There is minimal financial impact to receiving this report, and while staff costs for the Drought Task Force were not included in the Fiscal Year 2024-25 budget, participating departments have so far been able to carry out your Board's direction related to the task force without additional funding.

STAFFING IMPACT:
The staffing impact is limited to the staff time take to participate in the Drought Task Force.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:
California Department of Water Resources, Stantec Inc.

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:
Board discretion.

ATTACHMENTS:
N/A

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:
Meeting of: 5/25/2021
File No.: 21-674