COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 10/6/2026

File #: 26-1053

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Supervisor Rex Bohn

Agenda Section: Initiated by Board Member

Vote Requirement: Majority

SUBJECT:
El Niño Emergency Preparedness: Funding for Sandbags, Sand and Additional Resources

RECOMMENDATION(S):
That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Direct the County Administrative Office, in coordination with the Humboldt County Sheriff's Office of Emergency Services and Department of Public Works, to return to the Board with a financial plan, not to exceed $25,000, for the purchase and strategic placement of sand, sandbags and other emergency preparedness resources in flood-prone and low-lying areas and locations identified as appropriate based on historical flooding, community need and emergency preparedness considerations.

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

Area of Focus: Safe & Healthy Communities
Strategic Plan Category: 1009 - Expand county infrastructure resilience

DISCUSSION:
With El Niño conditions anticipated for the upcoming winter storm season, Humboldt County may experience increased storm activity and localized flooding, particularly in low-lying and historically flood-prone areas.

Pre-positioning sand, sandbags and other necessary emergency preparedness resources will help ensure supplies are readily available when needed. Staff have recommended the Board direct the County Administrative Office, in coordination with the appropriate county departments, to identify priority locations and resource needs and return to the Board with a financial plan not to exceed $25,000.

This recommendation is aligned with the County of Humboldt's Sandbag Policy that states, "The Humboldt County Board of Supervisors have recognized the need to have sufficient stocks of sand and sandbags available for public infrastructure protection and, when possible, to assist the citizens residing in the unincorporated areas of the County. As the procurement of sand and sandbags is difficult, if not impossible, during the times of their greatest need, sufficient planning and resources should be expended to have those needed items on hand prior to the emergency event. It should be the goal of the County to have at least 100,000 sandbags on hand for public infrastructure protection prior to each winter season. Sandbags needed for private property protection could be accessed from those stocks if it is determined that the entire stock is not necessary for protection of public assets."

With predicted El Niño conditions this winter storm season, this proactive effort will help strengthen the county's preparedness and capability to respond to potential storm impacts and flooding.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:
Funding source to be identified by the County Administrative Office.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:
The County Administrative Office will return to the Board with a financial plan identifying an appropriate funding source for emergency preparedness resources, including sand and sandbags, in an amount not to exceed $25,000.

STAFFING IMPACT:
Additional staff time across county departments, including the County Administrative Office, Sheriff's Office and Department of Public Works, will be required to research and draft a financial plan identifying an appropriate funding source for emergency preparedness resources, including sand and sandbags, in an amount not to exceed $25,000.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:
None

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:
Board discretion.

ATTACHMENTS:
Sandbag Policy Staff Report and Policy dated Jan. 9, 2004 for the meeting of Jan. 20, 2004

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:
Meeting of: Jan. 20, 2004
File No.: N/A