

WORK ELEMENT 20/21 – 21

RMRA – Sustainable Communities- Evacuation Routes & Communication Strategies for Safer Communities

OBJECTIVE

This project will provide a comprehensive plan for natural disaster response in Tuolumne County. Tuolumne County seeks to pro-actively identify strategies for working through natural disaster evacuation scenarios that will strain State (Routes 49, 108, 120) and local roadways and potentially prohibit housing developments from effectively evacuating. This planning process will illuminate existing vulnerable populations and transportation networks, plan for safe evacuations of people and property and most importantly produce a document outlining action items for all involved stakeholders.

Partners in the effort will include (but not limited to): Tuolumne County (CAO, Public Works, Sheriff, Public Health, Fire); Forest Service; Tribal Governments (Chicken Ranch/Tuolumne); Caltrans; City of Sonora; CAL FIRE; CHP; NPS.

Many portions of Tuolumne County and Sonora are considered disadvantaged communities depending on the metric being used. This project will assist Caltrans in managing.

DISCUSSION

Tuolumne County has a population of roughly 55,000 residents, most of which live within a CalFire designated zone of High or Extreme fire danger. A vast majority of these residents live in subdivisions or areas that were developed between the 1960's to 1990's, in some cases leaving them with only one access road to and from these residential areas. The State highways, 49, 108 and 120 are the main arterials used by locals and tourists to and through the area. Tourism is a major economic driver for the community and is the County's top industry, with millions of visits paid to the area for Yosemite, Stanislaus National Forest, State Parks (Railtown 1897 and Columbia Historic Park), reservoirs, skiing and many other recreational and social activities. Peak tourism coincides with the hottest, driest portion of the year which means fires are most likely at exactly the same time frame that millions of people are traveling to Tuolumne County destinations.

This combination of heavily forested communities, vast residential subdivisions, limited roadway networks and a changing climate have put Tuolumne County agencies, community groups and tourists on high alert that they are in the crosshairs of a potential Paradise-esque calamity. Recognizing these realities is not leading to paralysis, rather the opposite, an acute awareness that preparation must be made to create a response to a major natural disaster.

The importance of this project is that it will create the platform to take the next steps in creating viable routes for evacuation and strategies for sheltering in place. This project will communicate not only between agencies (which already takes place in a myriad of ways) but with the communities that are concerned about their ability to evacuate during the 2013 Rim Fire. Also important during an evacuation is getting access to information about what to do and where to go. These realities can be positively affected with good planning and communication. In addition to the vulnerable populations are the many visitors that come every year. This population is in many ways the most vulnerable of all, typically not familiar with the area, road network or alternatives that could be utilized. Communicating effectively with this population is critical during a natural disaster.

WORK ACTIVITIES

Kickoff meeting- October/November 2020

Task 21.1: Stakeholder invitation to be on Project Development Team- October/November

Task 21.2: Request for Proposal development/Firm selection-- November/December 2020

Task 21.3: Project Kickoff meeting with Project Development Team and Consultant- Dec/Jan '20-'21

Task 21.3: Identification of high risk housing subdivisions, commercial centers, community facilities- Jan-April 2021

Task 21.4: Identification of roadway network, deficiencies and strategies for increasing capacity/efficiency/effectiveness, access— Jan-April 2021

Task 21.5: Identify Vulnerable populations (+ Pops likely to struggle in evacuation) March-June 2021

Task 21.6: Identification of Shelter-in-place locations throughout the County-- March-June 2021

Task 21.7: Public Participation/Outreach Plan (POP/PPP)-- Jan-Feb 2021

Task 21.8: Communication Deployment Plan-- June- October 2021

Task 21.12: Project Invoicing: on-going

Task 21.13: Quarterly Reports: on-going

Task 21.14: Indirect Costs

END PRODUCT(S)

Task 21.1: Stakeholder list and Agenda/Minutes from meeting

Task 21.2: Request for Proposal/ Consultant contract

Task 21.3: Project kickoff meeting, stakeholder list, Agenda/minutes from meeting(s)

Goods and Services budgeted to cover the cost of a Consultant to deliver each element of scope of work.

The RMRA – Sustainable Communities- Evacuation Routes & Communication Strategies for Safer Communities Grant is a three-year grant that begins in FY20/21, with FY22/23 being its final year. The original grant award is for \$225,150 with \$29,171 of local match. We anticipate budgeting \$30,470 with a local match of \$3,948 paid by RPA funds in FY20/21 the balance of \$194,680 grant funding will be expended in the following two years.

WORK ELEMENT BUDGET

Responsible Agency	Budget	Funding Source
TCTC -Consultant	30,470	RMRA- Evacuation Rts & Communication Strategies for Safer Communities
Match	3,948	RPA Match
Total	34,418	