

FINAL PUBLIC NOTICE

TILDEN AND CLAREMONT FUELS MANAGEMENT ALAMEDA AND CONTRA COASTA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA HMGP-4407-404-166

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) proposes to provide federal financial assistance under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program to East Bay Regional Park District (Subapplicant) in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties, California, to mitigate impacts from wildfires through thinning plant species that are prone to burning and by promoting conversion to vegetation types with lower fuel loads (proposed action). Pursuant to Executive Order 11990 (Wetlands Management) and FEMA's implementing regulations at Title 44 of the Code of Federal Regulations Part 9, FEMA hereby provides interested parties with a notice of its final decision and an explanation of the alternatives that were considered.

The purpose of the proposed action is to reduce wildfire hazards. The proposed action consists of the following: 1) mechanical removal of grass, shrubs and trees up to 24 inches in diameter; 2) hand removal of brush; 3) chemical treatment of cut stumps and eucalyptus resprouts; 4) disposal of removed vegetation through burning, mastication, or chipping. The project work would encompass 194.2 acres within Tilden Regional Park and an additional 130.4 acres within Claremont Canyon Regional Preserve. This project would reduce fuel loads and fire intensity, primarily by thinning plant species that are prone to torching, and by promoting conversion to vegetation types with lower fuel loads. Oak and bay trees would be preserved, and dense scrub, eucalyptus forests, and non-native pine forests would be converted to grasslands with islands of shrubs. The staging area would be at the closest street at 9999 Redwood Road, Castro Valley.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Wetlands Inventory map shows riverine habitat within the project area.

A map of the project area and its location within wetlands is available for public inspection. Parties interested in receiving a copy of the map should contact the FEMA Region 9 Environmental Officer using contact information provided in this notice.

Three alternatives to the proposed action were considered: Alternative 1, No Action; Alternative 2, Broadcast Burning; and Alternative 3, Improvement of Firefighting Capacity. Alternative 1 would include taking no action and leaving conditions as they currently exist. This Alternative is not recommended because it would not address wildfire hazards. Alternative 2 included broadcast burning vegetation across the project area. This Alternative is not recommended because it would be dangerous to implement in the vegetation types and intermixed wildland-urban interface setting of the project area. Under Alternative 3, firefighting capacity would be improved through better equipment and tactics. This Alternative is not recommended because it would not reduce the risk of wildfire. FEMA has determined that the proposed project is the only practicable alternative available; therefore, the proposed action must be adjacent to wetlands. The proposed action would have no significant adverse impact on wetlands and would benefit the area by reducing the risk of

wildfires. Therefore, measures to minimize impacts on the wetlands are not necessary. The East Bay Regional Park District has declared that the proposed action conforms to local wetland standards, and would be responsible for the management, construction, and maintenance of the proposed action.

Additional information about FEMA's proposed action may be requested by writing the FEMA Region 9 Environmental Officer at FEMA, 1111 Broadway, Suite 1200, Oakland, California 94607, or fema-rix-ehp-documents@fema.dhs.gov. All requests should be received no later than 15 days after publication of this notice. No action will be taken before this date.