



October 8, 2015

Mr. Sam Walker
Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
Grants Management Unit / SRAFPF Grant
P.O. Box 944246
Sacramento, CA 94244-2460

Re: SRA Grant Program Funding

Mr. Walker,

The Mendocino Redwood Company has been actively involved with the Mendocino County Fire Safe Council (MCFSC) on a number of fronts, including the potential for much needed funding from the SRA Grant Program. The MCFSC will complete an update to the Community Wildfire Protection Plan by the end of the year which will outline a number of critical fire prevention projects. A recent review of the “Informational Report for State Responsible Area Fire Prevention Fee” was very informative. Although **\$5,418,913** was **collected** in the Mendocino Unit for the last three (3) fiscal years, **only \$6,000** has been **awarded** in FPF grants.

The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors has been actively engaging local Cal Fire staff to express their concerns about the lack of grant funds for the county. They are hearing from their constituents about the need for projects to protect residents in rural and suburban communities alike. They have also heard from local fire districts running on shoestring budgets to a point they have an uncertain future.

The work of the Resource Protection Committee of the Board of Forestry in developing a procedural guide for SRA grant projects is encouraging. This guide mentions the objective of proportional distribution of collected funds. In keeping with the intent of the SRA fee, this should be part of the final document.

Rural communities who have been underfunded and understaffed need proactive support from CalFire to access the grant process. As a result of this letter you may be inclined to note few grant applications from the Mendocino Unit and you would be correct. Rural communities, where fire risk is extreme and fire safety resources are light, are simply unable to wade through the process to gain access to the funds. It is overwhelming.

Rural communities need the weight and capability of a proactive Cal Fire to assist in accessing the program. Plainly, we are asking for guidance, potentially in the form of a workshop, to aid the communities in Mendocino County in returning much needed dollars from where they came. The local communities stand ready to do the work, please show them the way.

Mendocino County has been relatively unscathed by wildland fires thus far this season. However, neighboring communities have experienced massive loss of property and lives. By ensuring proportional distribution of SRA funds entities like the Mendocino County Fire Safe Council and local fire districts can move forward with fire prevention projects so many in this county are eager to accomplish.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Andersen".

John Andersen
Director, Forest Policy
Mendocino/Humboldt Redwood Companies

Cc: Board of Forestry and Fire Protection
Mendocino County Fire Safe Council
Mendocino County Board of Supervisors