

San Dieguito Planning Group

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August 26, 2022

San Diego County Board of Supervisors

1600 Pacific Highway, Room 310

San Diego, CA 92101

RE: Support for Multi-Jurisdictional Fire Evacuation Study

Dear County Supervisors,

The San Dieguito Planning Group (SDPG) supports the RSF Association, Olivenhain Town Council, and Encinitas Residents for Responsible Development effort to lobby the County Board of Supervisors to conduct a multi-jurisdictional study assessing fire evacuation safety during a major wildfire event. The proposed study would focus on evacuation planning for residents within the Rancho Santa Fe (RSF) Fire District and residents of Encinitas, Solana Beach, and Del Mar. Addressing this regional area, a multi-jurisdictional study would identify strategies for safe and well-coordinated fire evacuation in RSF Fire District communities overseen by RSF Fire Chief McQuead and the 3 cities overseen by Fire Chief Stein (Encinitas including Olivenhain, Solana Beach, and Del Mar).

As with many progressive California fire departments, both Chief Stein and Chief McQuead have identified the advantages of collaborating and coordinating to protect the safety of both residents and fire fighters. Such collaborations have helped other fire districts to improve planning, teamwork, problem-solving, and public safety, increasing the chances of an efficient and successful response to wildfire events.

Current peer-reviewed published studies on the subject predict that California properties facing severe wildfire threat will grow 6-fold over the next 30 years. It is further expected that the new California Fire Maps, which haven't been updated for 15 years, will identify more areas in our region under high threat of wildfire, fueled by our warmer climate, drought conditions, dense brush, and other flammable vegetation. Fire experts have stressed that California needs to improve its wildfire evacuation plans, incorporating data from fire behavior, traffic, and communications modeling.

The SDPG wishes to thank the Board of Supervisors for their willingness to pursue the proposed multi-jurisdictional wildfire evacuation study. This study may become a model for other San Diego County communities, saving resident and fire fighter lives, large animals and pets, homes and properties, and the associated financial/economic costs in the near future.

Sincerely,

Douglas Dill

Chair

San Dieguito Planning Group