

OFFICE OF THE  
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

March 9, 2021



Matthew H. Hymel  
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Marin County Board of Supervisors  
3501 Civic Center Drive  
San Rafael, California 94903

Daniel Eilerman  
ASSISTANT COUNTY  
ADMINISTRATOR

**SUBJECT:** Response to 2019-20 Grand Jury Report "Roadblocks to Safer Evacuation in Marin" (December 14, 2020)

Angela Nicholson  
ASSISTANT COUNTY  
ADMINISTRATOR

Dear Board Members:

Marin County Civic Center  
3501 Civic Center Drive  
Suite 325  
San Rafael, CA 94903  
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CRS Dial 711  
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**RECOMMENDATION:** Concur in and adopt the attached proposed response to the FY 2019-20 Marin County Civil Grand Jury Report entitled "Roadblocks to Safer Evacuation in Marin" and authorize the Board President to forward the response to the Presiding Judge of the Marin County Superior Court.

**SUMMARY:** The 2019-20 Civil Grand Jury Report published a report entitled "Roadblocks to Safer Evacuation in Marin." The report included a request for response from your Board.

Attached for your consideration, in accordance with §933 of the California Penal Code, is a proposed response. A copy of the Grand Jury report is also attached for your information.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** None.

**EQUITY IMPACT:** Concurrence with the proposed response will not result in any group being disproportionately impacted in a positive or negative way at this time. County departments will consider any equity impacts as policy is developed in this area.

**ALTERNATIVE:** The Board may amend any suggested response.

**REVIEWED BY:**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	County Counsel	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A
<input type="checkbox"/>	Human Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dept. of Finance	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A

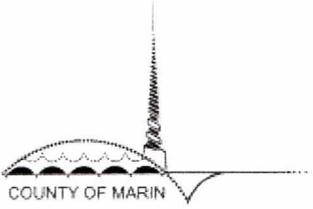
Respectfully submitted,

Reviewed by,

Daniel Eilerman  
Assistant County Administrator

Matthew H. Hymel  
County Administrator

CC: Sheriff Robert T. Doyle, Marin County Sheriff  
Jason Weber, Marin County Fire Chief  
Pat Echols, Interim Director, Marin County Public Works  
Tom Lai, Interim Director, Community Development Agency  
Mark Brown, ED, Marin Wildfire Protection Agency  
Anne Richman, ED, Transportation Authority of Marin



## RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY REPORT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

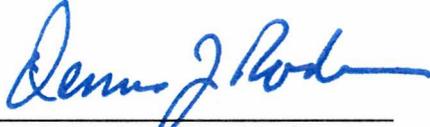
REPORT TITLE: "Roadblocks to Safer Evacuation in Marin"  
REPORT DATE: December 14, 2020  
RESPONSE BY: County of Marin Board of Supervisors

- We agree with the finding numbered: **F1, F5**
- We disagree wholly or partially with the findings numbered: **F2-F4**

### GRAND JURY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommendation numbered **R1** has been implemented.
- Recommendation numbered **R2** requires further analysis.
- Recommendation numbered **R3** has not yet been implemented but will be by December 2022.

Date: 3-9-2021

Signed:   
Dennis Rodon, President  
Marin County Board of Supervisors



## **RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY FINDINGS**

### **F1. No single agency or jurisdiction is taking responsibility and authority for building infrastructure for safe evacuation routes across jurisdictions in Marin County.**

#### **Agree.**

The responsibility for evacuation route infrastructure is shared because many factors contribute to evacuation readiness and safety. It's not yet clear that infrastructure in Marin is a material impediment to safe evacuation. In addition, slow evacuation is not necessarily unsafe. Residents sheltering in vehicles on paved surfaces, even in traffic, are in many cases safer.

The Marin County Department of Public Works (DPW) and Fire Department are regularly engaged in hazard reduction along roadways. Vegetation fuel reduction along roadways is ongoing and increasing with new funding available since July 2020 through the Marin Wildfire Protection Authority (MWPA). Vegetation along the public right-of-way is the adjacent landowner's responsibility, not a public agency's in most cases. If vegetation and near-roadway combustibles (on private property primarily) were managed appropriately, hazard would be nearly eliminated on residential evacuation routes. Private property hazards are being addressed as part of the increased defensible space inspection program.

### **F2. There is confusion in the county as to who has ultimate responsibility and authority for ensuring that Marin has safe evacuation routes.**

#### **Disagree partially.**

While there are many factors that contribute to safety and efficiency of evacuations, and responsibility for these factors may lie with multiple public agencies and/or private entities or landowners, the order to evacuate (and therefore responsibility) lies with the event law enforcement jurisdiction. We agree there is not a single agency or authority responsible for evacuation infrastructure. The new MWPA is assessing evacuation route planning and what improvements may be necessary, however public works departments, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), and private road owners will be responsible for implementing such improvements.

Since the early 2000's, fire agencies and law enforcement have worked together to create pre-determined evacuation zones, regularly provided multi-jurisdictional exercises, and integrated common terminology. Most recently, MWPA purchased Zonehaven to assist, law, fire and residents in executing safer, more timely evacuations.

### **F3. Marin County Board of Supervisors and town and city councils have the responsibility for safe evacuation routing, and they have not sufficiently considered evacuation as a criterion when approving improvements to roads and traffic infrastructure in their jurisdictions.**

#### **Disagree partially.**