



# MARIN COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT

Committed to the preservation of life, property and environment.



October 12, 2021

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

Jason Weber  
FIRE CHIEF

**SUBJECT:** 1) Accept report on the Fire Innovation, Recruitment & Education (F.I.R.E.) Foundry equity initiative and related contract with Conservation Corp North Bay (CCNB), and related budget and FTE adjustments.

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Woodacre  
Throckmorton Ridge  
Marin City  
Point Reyes  
Hicks Valley  
Tomales  
Ross Valley: Medic 18  
Tamalpais Fire Crew

Dear Supervisors:

**RECOMMENDATION:** 1) Accept report from Marin County Fire Department's "Fire Foundry" equity initiative 2) Authorize Marin County Fire to enter into agreement with Conservation Corp North Bay beginning January 1, 2022 through June 30, 2024, to provide a crew of twelve for fire fuels reduction work in Marin County for a two-year period for an amount not to exceed \$2,200,000; 4) Authorize the addition of 1.0 FTE Fire Engineer-40 Hour (0750) for a fixed term of two years, to act in a leadership role for this initiative and 5) Approve budget adjustments as detailed in the Fiscal Impact section below.

**SUMMARY:** The Fire Innovation, Recruitment & Education (F.I.R.E.) Foundry is a new partnership between Marin Fire Agencies, Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority (MWPA), Conservation Corps North Bay (CCNB), Marin County Office of Equity, U.C. Berkeley, Stanford University and College of Marin. The F.I.R.E Foundry Program's objective is to establish an emerging science and technology-savvy, community-oriented wildfire prevention workforce by providing job training and skills development for underserved, underrepresented and underfunded communities in Marin County. The workforce will support wildfire prevention efforts through fuels reduction work and creating defensible space around densely populated communities.

The F.I.R.E Foundry will recruit members of underserved, underrepresented and underfunded communities, and other populations that have overcome adversity and have not traditionally been represented in fire service. Recruits will fall into four phases. Phase 1 have no background in fire but are industrious and interested in learning about a career in or in relation to the fire service. Phase 2 recruits have completed EMS/EMT, are preparing to enter or have already entered Fire Academy. Phase 3 recruits meet the requirements to compete for a seasonal firefighter position with a Marin Fire Agency, and lastly, Phase 4 recruits are ready to compete for full-time firefighter positions within the fire service.

The following are benefits of participation:

- Earning and learning while working towards a sustainable wage career in fire services; accompanied by exploration of connected career pathways in the natural sciences, emergency response, and medicine;
- Provision of wrap-around supports such as food, housing, transportation, academic support services and resources from County of Marin's Health and Human Services to alleviate systemic barriers to building a sustainable wage career and higher quality of life;
- Access to a support system by being embedded into a strength-based, community-centered environment that cultivates resiliency, self-advocacy, and soft skill development through trauma-informed advising and mentorship;
- A unique college curriculum tailored for F.I.R.E. Foundry recruits, intentionally designed by the F.I.R.E. Foundry Program development team and College of Marin for the professional and educational advancement of people in the fire services;
- Professional skill development through participation in mock interviews, resume writing workshops and best practices for long-term financial planning; and to
- Exposure to emerging technologies and researchers from the UC system and Stanford in order to understand, demonstrate, and test the tools and technologies that tomorrow's firefighters will utilize to tackle the threat of wildland and structure fires.

The F.I.R.E Foundry program will lead to a diverse and tech-savvy fire service that represents the communities they serve. Recruits will be able to find and sustain fulltime employment in the fire services or in a related field after they complete the program, leading to long term, multi-generational upward mobility. The lion's share of the funding to sustain F.I.R.E Foundry comes from the clearance and defensible space work that our Phase I recruits will be doing annually through a partnership between Marin Fire Service, Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority, and Conservation Corp North Bay. Our funding gap will be supported through local donors, corporate partners, grants, and foundations invested in creating a pathway and training program that leads directly to sustainable wage careers within our community.

The program will build multiple career pathways and see participants through their career development journey beginning with participation on CCNB crews, then F.I.R.E Foundry crews, and eventually into supervisory roles. Our equity-centered collaboration model will support participants through a smooth and inclusive transition between employment and training with each of our partner institutions.

**EQUITY IMPACT:** The FIRE Foundry program is advancing equity by recruiting leaders from Marin County that represent the communities that they serve. The goal is upon completion of the program, crew recruits will be able to find and sustain fulltime employment in the fire services or in a related field, leading to financial stability of traditionally underfunded community members. Additionally, the goal is through this pilot program, recruits will be supported with wrap around services, mentorship and coaching to ensure retention, belonging and a culture that emphasizes equity and inclusion.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** There will be no increase in General Fund net county costs as a result of your Board's actions, as the cost of the contract and FTE will be fully funded through service charges and alternative funding sources. The agreement with Conservation Corp of North Bay (CCNB) will cost \$2,200,000 over two years and will be fully covered through billable vegetative management work.

Approval will increase Marin County Fire Miscellaneous Projects Fund (1010) expenditure appropriations of \$2,200,000 in the Fire Foundry Vegetation Management Project (23FOUNDRYCREW) for the contract expenditures and is fully offset by increased service charges revenue for work performed on behalf of cities, towns, the County, and other agencies in Marin.

Approval will add 1.0 FTE Fire Engineer-40 Hour (0750) for a fixed term of two years to partner as a lead for the new crew in the Vegetation Management program (10132302). The fully benefitted and outfitted cost of a Fire Engineer-40 Hour is approximately \$238,900, or roughly \$477,800 over the course of the two-year fixed term. Revenues earned through contract work will cover part of the position's cost, leaving roughly \$277,800 over two years which will be funded through a combination of additional reimbursable services, Countywide Equity funding, or the County's allocation of Marin County Wildfire Protection Authority tax proceeds. Marin County Fire will work with the County Administrator's Office to adjust its appropriations and FTE schedule for the current year and FY 2022-23 through FY 2023-24 to ensure no increased net county costs in the General Fund.

**REVIEWED BY:**     [ X ] County Administrator     [ X ] Human Resources

Respectfully Submitted,



Jason Weber  
Fire Chief





