

**REPORT/RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OF SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
AND RECORD OF ACTION**

July 9, 2024

FROM

DAN MUNSEY, Fire Chief/Fire Warden, San Bernardino County Fire Protection District

SUBJECT

Western Joshua Tree Hazard Management Permit Application

RECOMMENDATION(S)

Acting as the governing body of the San Bernardino County Fire Protection District, approve a non-financial Western Joshua Tree Hazard Management Permit Application with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to allow the San Bernardino County Fire Protection District to trim a Western Joshua Tree's branches at its Baldy Mesa fire station located at 11817 Anaconda Avenue in Phelan.

(Presenter: Dan Munsey, Fire Chief/Fire Warden, 387-5779)

COUNTY AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Improve County Government Operations.

Operate in a Fiscally-Responsible and Business-Like Manner.

Provide for the Safety, Health and Social Service Needs of County Residents.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Approval of the recommended permit will not result in the use of Discretionary General Funding (Net County Cost). The Western Joshua Tree Hazard Management Permit Application (Application) is non-financial in nature. However, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) will not allow the San Bernardino County Fire Protection District (SBCFPD) to make any alterations to a state protected Western Joshua Tree (Joshua Tree) without the required permit. If CDFW approves the Application and issues a permit (Permit), the Permit will allow SBCFPD to trim the Joshua Tree's dying branches that are leaning over a neighboring cellular tower site.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

SBCFPD's Baldy Mesa Fire Station is used as a communication facility and is no longer an active fire station. SBCFPD has a license agreement with American Tower Corporation (American Tower) for the use of a communication tower and an equipment shelter on the property. American Tower informed SBCFPD that there is a Western Joshua Tree growing on the site. Additionally, one of the tree's branches has broken away from the main stem of the tree, is drying out, and leaning on top of the roof of the cellular tower. American Tower has informed SBCFPD that the Joshua Tree's branch is affecting cellular tower communication.

The Western Joshua Tree Conservation Act (WJTCA) is a California Law that was enacted in July 2023. The WJTCA designates the Joshua Tree as a protected species and does not allow

**Western Joshua Tree Hazard Management Permit Application
July 9, 2024**

for any alterations to a Joshua Tree without a required permit. CDFW oversees the issuance of permits related to the Joshua Tree.

Approval of the non-financial Application with CDFW will allow SBCFPD to apply for, and if CDFW issues the Permit, trim the Joshua Tree's dying branches and will ensure that the cellular tower communication is not interrupted and that service to the communities is not affected.

The trimming of the Joshua Tree will not occur unless and until SBCFPD receives the Permit from CDFW and will be performed by a desert native plant specialist in accordance with WJTCA and CDFW Permit requirements.

PROCUREMENT

Not applicable.

REVIEW BY OTHERS

This item has been reviewed by County Counsel (Scott Runyan, Principal Assistant County Counsel, 387-5455) on May 29, 2024; Finance (Ivan Ramirez, Administrative Analyst, 387-4020) on June 11, 2024; and County Finance and Administration (Valerie Clay, Deputy Executive Officer, 387-5423) on June 11, 2024.

**Western Joshua Tree Hazard Management Permit Application
July 9, 2024**

Record of Action of the Board of Directors
San Bernardino County Fire Protection District

APPROVED (CONSENT CALENDAR)

Moved: Joe Baca, Jr. Seconded: Curt Hagman
Ayes: Col. Paul Cook (Ret.), Jesse Armendarez, Dawn Rowe, Curt Hagman, Joe Baca, Jr.

Lynna Monell, SECRETARY

BY 
DATED: July 9, 2024



cc: SBCFPD - Munsey w/ application for sign
File – SBCFPD w/ application
JLL 07/15/2024