



"Citrus Capital of the World"

City of Santa Paula

970 Ventura Street • Santa Paula, California • Mailing Address: P.O. Box 569 • 93061 • Phone: (805) 525-4478 • Fax: (805) 525-6278

June 10, 2021

California Fire Safe Council (CFSC)
21 USFS-SFA Grant Program
Application ID: 356253

Dear California Fire Safe Council Review Team:

On behalf of the City of Santa Paula, I am writing to support The C.R.E.W with their CFSC proposal: Ojai & Santa Paula Wildfire Prevention Program. As the Mayor of the City of Santa Paula, the City Council supports fuels reduction and community education as key elements of wildfire risk management.

The City of Santa Paula has a population vulnerable to the risks of wildfires for several reasons. As designated in CalEnviroScreen 3.0, the City of Santa Paula is designated as a low-income and disadvantaged community with poverty at the 91st percentile, linguistic isolation at the 95th percentile and a lack of higher educational attainment at the 96th percentile. In a predominantly Spanish speaking community, where poverty is already very high and above the State average, the loss of habitable structures and infrastructure would be catastrophic to our community as the housing burden in the City sits at the 82nd percentile in the State.

Fuel reduction services such as chipping, and brush clearance are a proven means to reducing wildfires and the threats they pose to public safety and community utilities and infrastructure. The C.R.E.W aims to not only continue to provide fuel reduction services but offer continued wildfire education, creating a resilient and informed community.

The C.R.E.W's wildfire prevention program was formed in 2019 post Thomas Fire to address the need for a city-wide resource of fuel reduction. Aimed at homeowners and low-income seniors by offering both drop-off and curbside chipping, the program has seen great success. The proposed funding from this grant will be a critical step in the expansion of our service area and bring this much needed resource to underserved areas outside of Ojai. The C.R.E.W's goal is to not only provide fuel reduction to lessen the threat of wildfire but to also provide wildfire prevention education and tools through community workshops. Giving community members the resources, they need to enact prevention strategies at home.

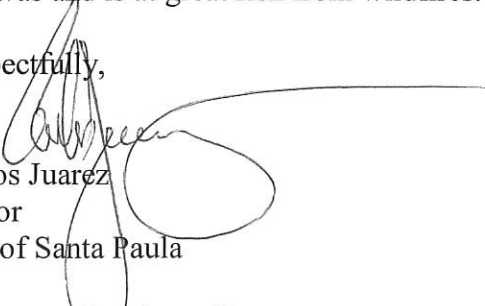
I believe The C.R.E.W's chipping program to be an invaluable service to our community and our neighbors in Ojai, CA. This service works in partnership with residents to reduce fuels and increase defensibility for this high-risk, densely populated region.

As the City of Santa Paula has a great need for this program, we stand by ready to assist with outreach, facilities and support to help The C.R.E.W be successful in our community. We can also help promote their cause through our social media outlets, web site channels and government cable access channels as their program is a community service that is free to residents and helps achieve one of our core safety goals in our newly adopted Strategic Plan.

Santa Paula is in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) and has had multiple experiences with wildfires over the last decade. Building wildfire resilience is a huge issue for our community and we want to do everything we can to protect our families, homes, businesses, neighborhoods and communities.

Your approval of the proposed grant to The C.R.E.W. will be of incalculable value to raising awareness and preparedness in a multigenerational, multicultural and multilingual community that was and is at great risk from wildfires.

Respectfully,



Carlos Juarez
Mayor
City of Santa Paula

Cc: City Council
City Manager
Gary Monday, Fire Battalion Chief, Ventura County