

Staff Report
Board Meeting Date: April 24, 2025

DATE: April 16, 2025
TO: District Board of Health
FROM: Erin Dixon, Deputy District Health Officer
(775) 328-2240 Edixon@nnph.org
SUBJECT: Presentation, discussion and possible approval of suspension of wide area larviciding including helicopter services and chemical purchases for the purpose of mosquito control for the 2025 Season (FOR POSSIBLE ACTION)

SUMMARY

Northern Nevada Public Health has been and continues to make decisions to ensure long-term financial stability. During the current fiscal year, positions have been held vacant, grant funds have been maximized, and fee increases implemented. Expenditures continue to outpace revenues and personnel costs increased significantly primarily due to the Washoe County Korn Ferry assessment and PERS increase.

In addition, over fifty percent of NNPH's operating budget comes through grants. There is uncertainty in funding at the federal level and NNPH recently experienced a sudden claw back of approximately \$2.6 million dollars of federal grant funding. Due to prior planning by NNPH, the impact of these claw backs to staff and the community was minimized. NNPH will not be able to minimize the impact of further significant reduction of funding.

In an effort to mitigate the impacts of further reductions or increased expenditures, the elimination of mosquito treatment is being proposed for the 2025 season. This includes the purchasing of chemicals and the use of a 3rd party helicopter in the application of larvicide. This is one of the largest NNPH programmatic expenditures that does not include staffing costs.

District Health Strategic Priority supported by this item:

- 6. Financial Stability:** Enable the Health District to make long-term commitments in areas that will positively impact the community's health by growing reliable sources of income.

PREVIOUS ACTION

The District Board of Health approved the FY25 budget on May 21, 2024, which included \$235,000 for Chemicals and \$46,000 for helicopter flights.

BACKGROUND

NNPH has historically used wide area larviciding (WAL) utilizing a helicopter to control the mosquito population in Washoe County. The larvicide, a specific mosquito abatement product, is applied to water where known mosquito breeding has been identified. Normally, helicopter treatments are conducted a minimum of 4 times per season between May and September. These activities are proposed to be eliminated for the 2025 Season saving NNPH \$265,000 in expenditures.

The Vector Borne Disease program will continue other surveillance and treatment activities. This includes monitoring the number of mosquitoes by utilizing specially designed traps to collect mosquitoes for identification and testing at the State Laboratory for potential disease. In addition, the team will continue to spot treat small bodies of water across the region. This is completed either by hand, with a drone, or other methods but cannot effectively treat the same acreage as the helicopter application. Additional program services that will remain unaffected include education, other disease mitigation and management, tick identification, and collaboration with sister agencies in the region.

If the DBOH should approve the elimination of services for the 2025 season the following next steps will occur:

Proactive media outreach and response to media inquiries. Messaging will include:

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- How the community can file a complaint and what to expect when a complaint is filed
- How the community can protect themselves
- How to access maps on smaller treatments, surveillance data, and any disease related information

In addition, this information will be available at community events such as family health festivals, food safety events, immunization events, and all events engaging with the public, regardless of public health topic.

If the DBOH does not approve this reduction in services, the Vector team will work to secure contracts for helicopter treatment beginning in June or early July. An arial application in May is not feasible due to contract timing.

FISCAL IMPACT

If the Board should support the recommendation, approximately \$265,619 will be unspent and reverted to the ending fund balance. \$19,381 of FY25 budget was utilized for helicopter flights during the 2024 mosquito season.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the District Board of Health approve the suspension of wide area larviciding including helicopter services and chemical purchases for the purpose of mosquito control for the 2025 Season

POSSIBLE MOTION

Should the Board agree with staff's recommendation, a possible motion would be: "Move to approve the suspension of wide area larviciding including helicopter services and chemical purchases for the purpose of mosquito control for the 2025 Season"