



WASHOE COUNTY

Integrity Communication Service

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STAFF REPORT

BOARD MEETING DATE: September 16, 2025

DATE: August 19, 2025

TO: Board of County Commissioners

FROM: Dave Solaro, Assistant County Manager

THROUGH: Kate Thomas, Interim County Manager

SUBJECT: Recommendation to retroactively approve a two-year Interlocal Contract between Washoe County and the State of Nevada acting by and through the Nevada Division of Forestry and the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, effective July 1, 2025 in the amount of [\$41,378.00] per fiscal year, for a total amount not to exceed [\$82,756.00], for the purpose of participating in the Wildland Fire Protection Program, in which the State provides fire incident resources, equipment and financial assistance in the mitigation of wildland fire incidents. Manager. (All Commission Districts). FOR POSSIBLE ACTION

SUMMARY

The staff is requesting that the Board of County Commissioners retroactively approve a two-year Interlocal Contract between Washoe County and the State of Nevada acting by and through the Nevada Division of Forestry and the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, effective July 1, 2025 in the amount of \$41,378.00 per fiscal year, for a total amount not to exceed \$82,756.00, for the purpose of participating in the Wildland Fire Protection Program, in which the State provides fire incident resources, equipment and financial assistance in the mitigation of wildland fire incidents; and would require the County to pay the State in exchange for the provision of specified wildland fire incident services. This action is necessary to ensure Washoe County maintains access to critical wildfire response resources, technical expertise, and cost-sharing mechanisms that are essential for effective emergency management and public safety. The proposed contract aligns with the Washoe County Strategic Objective: Safe, Secure and Healthy Communities, as outlined in the FY24-WashoeCounty-RefreshedStrategicPlan, by supporting regional collaboration and enhancing the County's capacity to respond to and recover from emergency wildland fire incidents.

The retroactive nature of the approval is due to the timing of contract negotiations between the State, Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District, and Washoe County. The agreement is structured to comply with NRS 277.180 and related statutes, and incorporates best practices for interlocal cooperation, fiscal accountability, and

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operational transparency. Approval of this contract will enable Washoe County to continue leveraging state resources for wildfire suppression, prevention, and recovery, while meeting statutory obligations and advancing the County's strategic goals.

PREVIOUS ACTION

On June 20, 2023, the Board of County Commissioners approved a two-year Interlocal Contract between Washoe County and the State of Nevada, acting by and through the Nevada Division of Forestry, for the period of July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2025. The agreement provided for the County to pay the State in exchange for specified emergency fire incident services, including resources, equipment, and financial assistance for fire mitigation.

Prior to the 2023-2025 contract, the Board approved similar two-year Interlocal Contracts with the Nevada Division of Forestry for the periods July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2023, July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2021, July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2019, and July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2017.

BACKGROUND

The evolution of interlocal cooperation for wildfire management in Washoe County reflects both the region's unique fire risk profile and the broader legal and policy frameworks governing emergency response in Nevada. The County's approach to wildfire mitigation and emergency wildland fire incident response has been shaped by a combination of statutory authorities, interagency agreements, and strategic planning efforts, all designed to address the increasing frequency and severity of wildland fires in the region.

Washoe County's engagement in interlocal agreements for wildfire protection dates back several decades, with a consistent focus on leveraging state and federal resources to supplement local capabilities. The County's jurisdiction encompasses a diverse landscape, including wildland-urban interface areas that are particularly vulnerable to wildfire. Recognizing these risks, Washoe County has prioritized collaborative approaches to fire prevention, suppression, and recovery, working closely with the Nevada Division of Forestry (NDF), the Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD), and federal partners such as the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management.

The intent of these interlocal contracts has been to formalize roles, responsibilities, and cost-sharing mechanisms for wildfire response, ensuring that Washoe County can access specialized resources, technical expertise, and financial assistance during emergency fire incidents. Over time, these agreements have evolved to address emerging challenges, such as the need for rapid mobilization of resources, the integration of new technologies, and the development of comprehensive billing and reimbursement procedures. The County's participation in the Wildland Fire Protection Program (WFPP) has further institutionalized these practices, providing a standardized framework for interagency cooperation and fiscal accountability.

Known challenges in this domain have included the complexity of coordinating multiple agencies with overlapping jurisdictions, the unpredictability of wildfire behavior, and the need to balance immediate response with long-term mitigation and community resilience. Opportunities have arisen through the establishment of executive and review committees, annual coordination meetings, and the adoption of best practices for incident management and cost recovery. Community considerations have also played a significant role, with public education, defensible space initiatives, and fire-adapted community programs forming key components of the County's wildfire strategy.

The legal authority for interlocal contracts between Washoe County and the State of Nevada is established under NRS 277.180, which permits public agencies to contract for the performance of governmental services that each is authorized by law to perform. This statute provides the foundational legal basis for the County's participation in the WFPP and similar agreements. The Nevada Division of Forestry operates under NRS 232.010(1) and NRS 232.090(c), with specific responsibilities for fire control outlined in NRS 472 and mutual aid managed pursuant to NRS 414A. The Division is also required to adhere to NRS 477.030(1)(a), 477.030(6), and NAC 477.281(c), which govern fire safety standards and administrative procedures.

FISCAL IMPACT

As previously detailed in the Background and Summary sections, the proposed two-year Interlocal Contract between Washoe County and the State of Nevada, acting through the Nevada Division of Forestry, establishes a framework for the County to access state-provided wildfire mitigation and emergency fire incident services.

The fiscal impact for the County is \$41,378.00 per fiscal year, for a total not to exceed \$82,756.00 for the two-year contract. Sufficient FY26 budget authority exists within the Office of the County Manager's Fire Suppression Admin (187510) Payments to Other Agencies (710400) account.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation to retroactively approve a two-year Interlocal Contract between Washoe County and the State of Nevada acting by and through the Nevada Division of Forestry and the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, effective July 1, 2025 in the amount of [\$41,378.00] per fiscal year, for a total amount not to exceed [\$82,756.00] for the purpose of participating in the Wildland Fire Protection Program, in which the State provides fire incident resources, equipment and financial assistance in the mitigation of wildland fire incidents.

POSSIBLE MOTION

Should the Board agree with the staff's recommendation, a possible motion would be: "Move to retroactively approve a two-year Interlocal Contract between Washoe County and the State of Nevada acting by and through the Nevada Division of Forestry and the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, effective July 1, 2025 in the amount of [\$41,378.00] per fiscal year, for a total amount not to exceed [\$82,756.00] for the purpose of participating in the Wildland Fire Protection Program, in which the State

provides fire incident resources, equipment and financial assistance in the mitigation of wildland fire incidents.