

CLARK COUNTY
STAFF REPORT



DEPARTMENT/DIVISION: Environmental Services / Resource Enhancement & Permitting / Sustainable Forestry

DATE: January 17, 2014

REQUEST: Authorize the Environmental Services Director to implement the Camp Hope Forest Stewardship Plan including removal of hazard trees and minor thinning to promote forest health in the immediate vicinity of the camp.

CHECK ONE: Consent Hearing Chief Administrative Officer

BACKGROUND: The camp across from Lewisville Park in Battle Ground, Washington has been left vacant since 1996. The county is currently unable to put this site to use. Camp Hope has organized a grassroots effort involving local businesses and community members. This non-profit organization's goal is providing a safe place for the youth of our community where they can go to enjoy the outdoors, learn valuable life lessons alongside caring mentors, and build life-long friendships. Substantial improvements have already been made by the organization to the structures at Camp Hope.

The hazard tree removal and thinning for forest health at Camp Hope proposed in the Forest Stewardship Plan were identified and approved as a project back in late 2012. The County Forester was working at the direction of the Director at that time of Environmental Services and the Board of County Commissioners currently serving. Drafting the Forest Stewardship Plan, certification under the American Tree Farmer's Sustainable Forestry Initiative, and a forest practices application from the Department of Natural Resources were pursued and approved in early 2013 (Attachments). The project was then placed on hold for reasons unknown.

Although the work at Camp Hope falls under the umbrella of sustainable forestry, the Forest Stewardship Plan for this site focuses on maintenance of the camp to protect the valuable resources that have been improved in recent years. The many hazard trees that are planned for removal pose a substantial threat to these resources and have even caused damage to those structures recently.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH: The Camp Hope organization and its constituents are the most immediate primary stakeholders. The County Forester has been in consultation with the organization's staff to ensure the needs of the camp are being met with implementation of the Forest Stewardship Plan.

BUDGET AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS: Funding for staff time and professional services is included in the 2013-2014 approved Environmental Services Budget. Forestry operations implemented as part of this Forest Stewardship Plan will be financially self-sustaining, potentially returning revenues from resultant timber sales to the General Fund. Net operating revenue from forestry operations and maintenance at Camp Hope will be reinvested in the infrastructure of the camp. The Camp Hope Forest Stewardship Plan is consistent with the Clark County Sustainability Policy, Environmental Services' Business Plan goals, and the lease agreement and goals of Camp Hope.

FISCAL IMPACTS: Yes (see Fiscal Impacts Attachment) No

ACTION REQUESTED: Authorize the Environmental Services Director to implement the Camp Hope Forest Stewardship Plan including removal of hazard trees and minor thinning to promote forest health in the immediate vicinity of the camp. Implementation of the plan includes a small works contract for logging operations, the disposition of the timber through sale to responsive bidders, and reinvestment of net operating revenue into the infrastructure of Camp Hope at the discretion of the County Administrator.