



October 3, 2022

To: Forest Service, US Department of Agriculture

On behalf of The Bear River Band of The Rohnerville Rancheria, I would like to express our support for the Mattole Restoration Council's Prosper Ridge Community Wildfire Resilience Project application to the Community Wildfire Defense Grant (CWDG). This project will benefit Bear River Band of the Rohnerville Rancheria by implementing fuels reduction treatments on our recently re-acquired 131-acre properties on Prosper Ridge in Petrolia. Treatment will increase safety for Tribal Members and guests who use the land for culture camps, workshops, and other events by reducing forest fuel load and improving emergency egress in the case of wildfire. In addition, fuels reduction will allow for the implementation of cultural burns, improve Coastal Prairie habitat, and increase the diversity of culturally significant plant species on the land by reducing encroachment of woody vegetation.

In 2021 the Bear River Band purchased 131 acres of ancestral territory near the mouth of the Mattole River and alongside the Bureau of Land Management's King Range Conservation Area (KRNCA). The number of visitors to the KRNCA has exploded over the past few years and has resulted in widespread use of the public land adjacent to the Bear River property. Most visitors are mindful to use care with campfires but there is still great concern that an escaped campfire could impact Bear River land. Fuels reduction will improve the likelihood of a successful "initial attack" on a campfire escape and reduce the chance of catastrophic wildfire.

We are working with the Mattole Restoration Council to initiate fuels treatment and cultural/prescribed fire on our land because they are a local organization with capacity to support this work.

Respectfully,

Josefina Frank
Tribal Chairwoman
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