



COUNTY OF DEL NORTE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

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BOARD REPORT

DATE: September 14, 2020

AGENDA DATE: September 15, 2020

TO: DEL NORTE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT: Heather Snow, Director 
Health and Human Services

SUBJECT: Proclamation of Local Health Emergency

RECOMMENDATION FOR BOARD ACTION:

Approve a Proclamation of a local health emergency as a result of the current Slater Fire, Devil Fire, and Red Salmon Complex Fires affecting Del Norte County, as requested by the Public Health Officer.

DISCUSSION/SUMMARY:

On September 9, 2020 Del Norte County was notified that the Slater Fire in Siskiyou County was growing rapidly, creating a local health emergency which included immediate evacuation of Gasquet, CA. This proclamation is entered with the desired result of being able to provide assistance to private property owners for timely removal of hazardous waste, and materials that could cause an imminent threat to public and environmental health.

ALTERNATIVES:

None

CHILDREN'S IMPACT STATEMENT:

This action meets two of the five outcome measures for children in Del Norte County: 4) Families are safe, stable and nurturing; and 5) Communities are safe and provide a high quality of life.

FINANCING:

Unknown at this time. Not expected to impact the county general fund.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

Local, state, tribal, and non-profit organizations.

SIGNATURES REQUIRED:

Del Norte County Public Health Officer.

ADMINISTRATIVE SIGN-OFF:

AUDITOR:

COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER: Jay Sarina, YES

COUNTY COUNSEL: Joel Campbell-Blair, YES

PERSONNEL:

OTHER DEPARTMENT:

Proclamation of a Local Health Emergency

By The Del Norte County Health Officer

WHEREAS, California Health and Safety Code, Division 101, Part 3, Chapter 2, Article 2, Section 101075 through 101095, confer upon local health officers of the political subdivisions of the State of California, emergency powers necessary to protect public health and safety; and

WHEREAS, California Health and Safety Section 101080 empowers the County Health Officer to declare a Local Health Emergency in the jurisdiction or any area affected by the threat to the public health; and

WHEREAS, Section 101080 of the California Health and Safety Code authorizes a local health officer to declare a local health emergency whenever the local health officer reasonably determines that the hazardous waste of medical waste or waste that may become a hazardous waste or medical waste, and is an immediate threat to public health, and

WHEREAS, the local health officer's proclamation of local health emergency is subject to ratification by the Board of Supervisors within seven days and reaffirmation every thirty days thereafter until such health emergency is terminated; and

WHEREAS, several fires are impacting our region: Red Salmon Complex, Slater, and Devil Fires, seriously impacting the health and safety of Del Norte County; and

WHEREAS, the Del Norte County Health Officer hereby finds, as follows:

1. On July 27th, 2020, the Salmon Complex Fire began in remote mountainous areas of adjacent Trinity County. It has steadily grown since then and now involves portions of Northern Humboldt County and is approaching the southern border of Del Norte County; and
2. On September 9, 2020 Del Norte County was notified that the Slater Fire in Siskiyou County was growing rapidly, creating a local health emergency which included immediate evacuation of the Gasquet, California area and sites and residences along Highway 199; and
3. Beginning September 9, 2020 conditions created by the Slater and Red Salmon Fires have created and continue to create debris which may be or which may become hazardous and a threat to public health; and
4. The threat to public health creates the immediate need to facilitate assistance and undertake preventative measures to protect the health of people and the environment

and to inform the affected public of any potential health issues associated with the hazardous waste created by the 2020 Slater and Red Salmon Fires, thereby necessitating the proclamation of the existence of a local health emergency; and

5. Regardless of cause, any commercial or domestic structure fires which have or will occur in Del Norte County from the time the local fires including the 2020 Slater and Red Salmon Complex fires, in and surrounding Del Norte County began until the conclusion of the local health emergency will significantly contribute to the hazardous material load; and
6. Assistance to private property owners and to others within Del Norte County is needed for timely implementation of necessary preventative measures to protect public health and the environment; and
7. The scope and breadth of the 2020 Slater and Red Salmon Complex Fires create an imminent threat to public health, and in the presence of apparent hazardous waste and materials require a rapid response to be safely removed from the sites of burned structures; and
8. Children and high risk adults are particularly vulnerable to the presence of such dangerous materials and hazardous waste, and the risk to children becomes more immediate as families are returned to their properties; and
9. The potential advent of the rainy season offers little time to mitigate further environmental contamination, including contamination of the watershed, and , therefore time is of the essence in removing hazardous waste and materials from property sites; and
10. Immediate action is necessary to remove hazardous waste, including but not limited to toxic, flammable, corrosive, and reactive materials from property sites within the 2020 Slater and Red Salmon Complex areas.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE DEL NORTE COUNTY HEALTH OFFICER DECLARES AND PROCLAIMS, as follows:

1. A local health emergency exists throughout Del Norte County as due to the hazardous waste and materials created by the 2020 Slater and Red Salmon Complex Fires, and any such condition may be exacerbated by the ongoing fires and will continue until the conclusion of this local health emergency.
2. During the existence of said local health emergency, the powers, functions, and duties of the Del Norte County Health Officer shall be those prescribed by state law, including provisions if Section 101085 of the California Health and Safety Code, and any ordinances and resolutions approved by the Del Norte County Board of Supervisors.

3. In connections with the foregoing proclamation and order of local health emergency, the Del Norte County Health Officer orders that immediate action be taken to remove hazardous waste and materials from property sites within the Slater and Red Salmon Complex Fire areas that are toxic, flammable, corrosive or reactive and create an imminent threat to public health and safety.
4. This proclamation of local health emergency shall be reviewed by the Del Norte County Board of Supervisors within seven days and if not confirmed and ratified by the Board of Supervisors it shall expire on the seventh day, or such earlier date as specified by the Board of Supervisors.

Warren Rehwaldt, M.D
Del Norte County Health Officer

Date