

**MARIN WILDFIRE
PREVENTION AUTHORITY**

INVESTING IN A FIRE ADAPTED MARIN COUNTY

1
YEAR



2020 – 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

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YEAR ONE SHIFTING THE WILDFIRE PARADIGM IN MARIN COUNTY

Vision Statement

Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority communities are informed, prepared, fire adapted, resilient and capable of withstanding a major fire limiting loss of life and major property damage while protecting our rich environmental diversity.

Mission Statement

The Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority leads the development of fire adapted communities using sound scientific, financial, programmatic, ecological practices, vegetation management, community education, evacuation and warning systems with the support of its member and partner agencies.

LETTER FROM BRUCE GOINES, BOARD PRESIDENT

It is my honor to present the 2020-2021 Annual Report for our newly formed Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority (MWPA). The Citizens of Marin delivered a strong message last year in voting to support Marin County Measure C and to establish the MWPA Joint Powers Authority. Our Fire Chiefs, City Administrators, MWPA Board members and employees have worked tirelessly to quickly stand this Authority up in a manner consistent with Measure C Guidelines. The first order of business for the Board of Directors has been setting the budget and strategic direction to guide the organization into the future and to put in place the programs and procedures to invest in the critical wildfire prevention work in our communities.

The adopted budget created several important programs. These include the Defensible Space and Home Hardening Program, funding for local jurisdictions to address their specific fire safety needs unique to their community, a chipper program and ongoing public education program carried out by Fire Safe Marin (FSM). We're proud to say that these programs are well on their way to helping Marin adapt to the inevitable wildfire.

We look forward to working over the next decade to address the critical wildfire prevention needs of our communities.

Bruce Goines, 2020/21 Board President

Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority

MWPA MEMBERS

The following 17 agencies are voting members in MWPA:

- Bolinas Fire District
- City of Larkspur
- City of Mill Valley
- City of San Rafael
- County of Marin
- Inverness Public Utility District
- Kentfield Fire Protection District
- Marinwood Community Services District
- Muir Beach Community Services District
- Novato Fire Protection District
- Sleepy Hollow Fire Protection District
- Southern Marin Fire Protection District
- Stinson Beach Fire Protection District
- Town of Corte Madera
- Town of Fairfax
- Town of Ross
- Town of San Anselmo

YEAR AT-A-GLANCE: MAJOR MILESTONES



LETTER FROM MARK BROWN, EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Adapting to the New Normal The western United States is facing a growing wildfire crisis. Decades of fire suppression coupled with the increasing impacts of climate change have dramatically increased wildfires' size and intensity throughout the west. Building in or near forests and natural vegetation, an area known as the wildland-urban interface (WUI), has exacerbated wildfire problems. It is evident with today's wildfire environment that we must change our wildfire prevention practices. Total elimination of wildfire is not only impossible, but not advisable. Instead, we must create fire adapted communities and learn to coexist with wildfire.

Coordinating across boundaries Wildfire knows no jurisdictional boundaries; fire prevention efforts must be proactive, regional activities.



17 agencies combine into 5 Geographic Zones

After the devastating wildfires of 2017 in neighboring counties, an interdisciplinary team in Marin County met to identify how to best address the new wildfire prevention paradigm. One key finding was that no single agency existed for coordinating wildfire prevention activities across jurisdictional boundaries.

Stronger together Through targeted investments, coordination, and partnerships, MWPA is developing a more holistic approach to fire management where local communities, property owners, and government agencies work together to co-manage fire risk and create a fire adapted Marin County.

Mark Brown, Executive Officer
Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority

LEADING THE DEVELOPMENT OF A FIRE ADAPTED MARIN

MWPA believes that every member of the community has a role to play in fire preparedness.



First Responders

Craft fire prevention, preparedness, and emergency response plans. Educate community.



Civic Leaders

Develop laws and policies in support of fire prevention, preparedness and risk reduction.



Marin Residents

Modify homes to be more fire resistant. Be prepared and subscribe to alerts.



Land Managers

Manage landscapes for lowered fuel loads, lower fire intensity and ecological resiliency to fire.



Developers & Business Owners

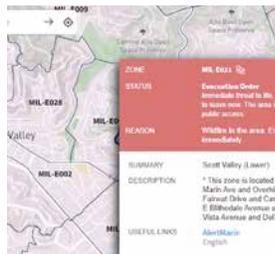
Don't build in high-risk areas. Build with fire-resistant materials.

FIVE MWPA GOAL AREAS



Reduce Flammable Vegetation

Vegetation Management and Local Wildfire Prevention Mitigation



Improve Detections and Evacuations

Wildfire Detection, Alert, and Evacuation Program Improvements



Grant Programs

Grants to assist residents in reducing fire risks



Education and Outreach

Public outreach and education about fire prevention, preparedness, and risk reduction



Fire Resistant Homes

Defensible Space Evaluations and Home Hardening

LETTER FROM LARRY CHU, CITIZENS OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

When Marin County residents approved Measure C, one provision was to have an independent Citizens' Oversight Committee (COC). The role of the COC is to review spending by the MWPA and to evaluate the work program to ensure that both are in accordance with what the public voted for.

The COC consists of nine members: one representative from each of the MWPA's five geographical zones, and one representative each from environmental organizations, taxpayer organizations, civic organizations, and fire prevention organizations.

In its first six months, the COC created bylaws, policies and procedures, and a code of conduct to serve as their operating framework. In the second six months, the COC has formed subcommittees to conduct the following reviews:

- Expenditures are consistent with the metrics as defined in the Joint Power Agreement.
- Work program is consistent with the projects and initiatives as defined in the Joint Powers Agreement.
- Open government practices and reporting are effective in providing the public with access to the decisions made and process in which those decision were made.

Following the annual review of the MWPA finances by an independent auditor, the COC will issue a report with its findings and distribute to all stakeholders within the 17-member jurisdiction.

Larry Chu, Committee Chair

MWPA Citizens' Oversight Committee
Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority



WHAT IS MEASURE C?

Approved by Voters With 70.8% support of most Marin County voters¹, Measure C was passed in March 2020 to fund proactive, state-of-the-art wildfire prevention and preparedness efforts.

10-Year Parcel Tax Measure C approved a tax to all parcels of real property in Marin County within the defined boundary of the "Member Taxing Entities," starting in 2020-21 for a period of ten years. The parcel tax levies up to 10¢ per building square foot (\$75 per multifamily unit) for ten years, providing \$19,300,000 annually, with annual inflation adjustments, independent citizen oversight/audits, and low-income senior exemptions.

For Wildfire Prevention The revenues raised by this tax are used solely to plan, finance, implement, manage, own, and operate a multi-jurisdictional agency to prevent and mitigate wildfires in Marin County.

Created the Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority A Joint Powers Agreement among 17 member agencies covering most of Marin County created the Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority (MWPA) to coordinate fire prevention activities using Measure C funds.

| Program Area | % of funds |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| JPA Core: Cross-Jurisdictional Projects Wildfire detection and evacuation program improvements, vegetation management/fire hazard reduction, grants management, public education implemented by Fire Safe Marin | 60% |
| Defensible Space Evaluations and Home Hardening (agencies can administer) | 20% |
| Community-Level Wildfire Prevention Mitigation Local jurisdiction fire prevention issues with no funding including enhanced fire patrols for problem areas, additional fire hazard reduction work, evacuation route and parking issues | 20% |

¹ Excluding the Town of Tiburon and the City of Belvedere.

2020/21 PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

GOAL: REDUCE FLAMMABLE VEGETATION MWPA and its member agencies' ecologically sustainable vegetation management programs are designed to reduce hazards and achieve measurable fuel reduction as outlined in the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP).

Project Examples

In Fiscal Year 2020-21, local fire prevention and mitigation programs by member jurisdictions are off to a good start. Many of these projects take some lead time to plan due to environmental compliance needs and waiting for the right season to implement. Expect to see a variety of projects to reduce wildfire fuels in and near communities including:

GOAT GRAZING



SHADED FUELBREAKS



EVACUATION ROUTE CLEARING



MWPA SUCCESS IN SAN RAFAEL HILL

On the night of August 16, 2021, a fire started in a ravine and traveled uphill on the east side of San Rafael Hill. The San Rafael Fire and Police Departments and many local partner agencies responded immediately to the scene, and the fire was extinguished within an hour.

The fire began in area that has been part of a multi-year wildfire mitigation effort to assure the fire road was safe and accessible to firefighters. This included MWPA-funded projects that thinned the vegetation.

The MWPA-funded work in the area included three components: 1) vegetation removal along Coleman and Graceland Drives to improve evacuation routes and assure that fire engines and ambulances could safely respond on the narrow roads; 2) the creation of a shaded fuel break behind homes. A shaded fuel break removes surface and ladder fuels closer to the ground, limiting the fire's ability to spread into the crowns of trees; and 3) goat grazing to create a fuel break.

The San Rafael Fire Department reports that this recent fire mitigation work slowed the spread of the fire and allowed crews to safely respond with multiple access points. Additionally, some of the local houses had recently created defensible space around their homes. All of these combined efforts gave the community and fire crews a higher level of confidence that roads would be accessible and defending the neighboring homes would be more likely to succeed.

This fire demonstrates that we don't have to rely on luck. Instead, we can plan ahead and implement strategic projects that reduce risks to our communities.

2020/21 PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

GOAL: IMPROVE DETECTIONS AND EVACUATIONS Implement state-of-the-art wildfire detection, warning, and alert systems, and develop and maintain a countywide network of safe evacuation routes and temporary refuge areas for residents during evacuations.



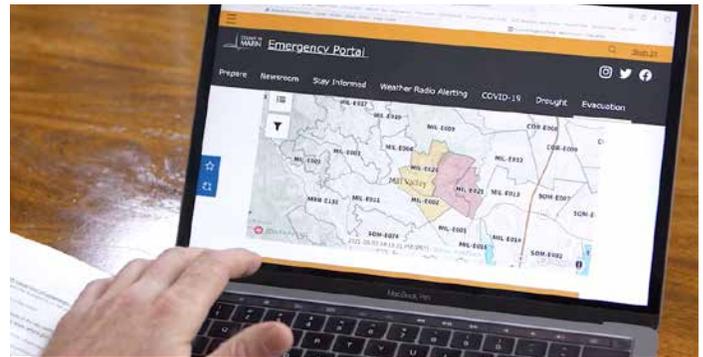
Red Flag Warning Signs

Fire Safe Marin developed the prototype for a standardized Red Flag Warning sign and distributed 16 signs to fire agencies on a pro rate basis. Once the effectiveness is evaluated, participating fire agencies and non-governmental agencies such as Firewise sites will display these signs only when directed to do so by the Marin County Fire Chiefs. These signs replaced older roadway signs previously funded by Fire Safe Marin. On Red Flag days the signs are opened and locked into place to display the “Red Flag Warning Today” message. When it is not a Red Flag event, the signs are locked and closed, but are equipped with inserts that can display multiple safety messages.



NOAA Weather Radios

1000 NOAA weather radios were distributed by Fire Safe Marin to the 17 MWPA jurisdictions on a pro rata basis as a pilot program. Extra batteries were also distributed to users. An additional 1000 radios were distributed to Novato residents by the Novato Fire Department. Survey data will be collected to measure the effectiveness of the program.



Zonehaven Mapping Platform

The Marin County Sheriff’s Office, along with all Marin municipalities and MWPA, worked with a private company called Zonehaven to delineate countywide evacuation zones in a new web-based evacuation mapping tool. The goals of the tool is to help agencies to pre-plan, run drills and scenarios, and to help county residents and businesses be better prepared for the next evacuation or emergency.

In the 2020/21 fiscal year, the operations team focused on populating the evacuation platform. When an evacuation occurs, public safety officials will update the community with zone-specific information on the map including up-to-date evacuation status, live incident updates, and relevant resources such as shelter options.

A three-year subscription to the Zonehaven platform has been funded by Measure C funds through the Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority as well as by the Town of Tiburon and the City of Belvedere who are not current MWPA members. The program will launch for residents in the 2021/22 fiscal year.

2020/21 PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

GOAL: EDUCATION AND OUTREACH Work with Fire Safe Marin and member agencies to encourage members of the public to do their part in creating ecologically sustainable fire adapted communities, reducing fire-related risks, and minimizing the impact of disaster events.



Living with Fire Webinar Series

Fire Safe Marin hosted monthly webinars with expert speakers and resident Q&A on various fire preparedness topics including “How to Survive a Wildfire,” “Home Hardening,” “Fire Smart Landscaping,” “Fire Insurance,” “Defensible Space,” Managing Vegetation in Marin’s Open Space,” “Community Organizing,” and “How Wildfires Burn in the WUI.” Attendance was generally between 100-500 people.



Ready Set Fifth Grade

This project aimed at fifth graders piloted an online, interactive prevention and preparedness course in schools. This online course and supplemental handouts are available in English and Spanish. The course was delivered to the Marin County Board of Education, and the feedback from teachers piloting the program have been very positive. The schools plan to continue to offer the course.



Workshop for Landscape Professionals

Fire Safe Marin worked with the California Landscape Contractors Association–North Coast Chapter to develop an educational program for landscape contractors. The program includes education about how wildfire spreads and best practices for developing a Fire-Smart Landscape.



Community Workshops

These five community workshops were designed around skills that could be employed by residents to improve wildfire safety. Between May and June 2021, representatives from each of the five MWPA zones participated in their respective workshop to highlight local projects, concerns, and actions to take in advance of wildfire season.

2020/21 PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

GOAL: FIRE RESISTANT HOMES Provide funding and technical resources to conduct defensible space structure and landscape evaluations to help owners/stewards of homes achieve effective defensible space and home hardening.



MWPA Chipper Days Program

Partnering with Fire Safe Marin, the MWPA provided curbside pickups up for residents of Marin County, providing service for each of the approximately 70 Marin Firewise Sites and two additional days of service to each of the 17 MWPA member agencies. The program was managed with software that scheduled reservations, mapped efficient routes, estimated pile size, collected photos of all piles chipped, and generated satisfaction surveys. Surveys showed that the program was extremely popular. From July 6 through December 1, 2020, MWPA made 2,478 curbside pick ups, removed 14,766 cubic yards of biomass, and delivered over 2,500 cubic yards of chipped materials for conversion to energy.



Defensible Space Evaluators

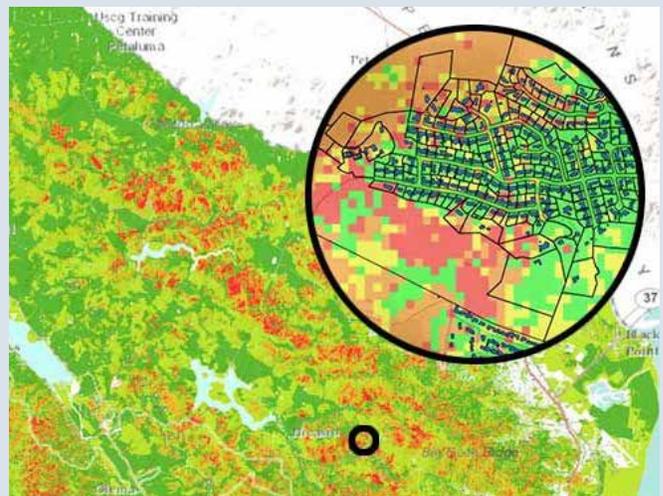
Defensible space is one of the best ways to help protect your home from wildfire, and state law requires it. To that end, MWPA is providing funding to member fire agencies for defensible space evaluators. There were 54 evaluators across Marin County funded by MWPA in Fiscal Year 2020/21. The goal is to evaluate one third of Marin homes within member jurisdictions annually, so homes would be assessed by a trained professional every 3 years.

PRIORITIZING A “HOUSE-OUT APPROACH”

The Marin Community Wildfire Protection Plan sets the countywide priorities for wildfire prevention, preparedness, and risk reduction in Marin County. The plan emphasizes the importance of individual homes in preventing disaster and includes parcel-level data about fire risk to help model and prioritize risk reduction activities.

A “house out approach” begins with residents creating defensible space around structures and hardening homes. It also means being prepared to evacuate when necessary.

Current and forthcoming MWPA programs will continue to prioritize this “house out” approach, empowering residents to take part in reducing community risk and evolving to a fire adapted Marin County.



PROJECTED REVENUE ALLOCATION

The MWPA Joint Powers Agreement signed by the 17 member agencies requires that 80% of the “Core” budget for cross-jurisdictional projects is spent in the geographic region (referred to as “Ops Areas”) from which the revenue is generated over a five (5) year average. The estimated revenue generation for each Ops Area is detailed in the table below.

This table outlines the expected overall revenue for the MWPA, revenue generation from each geographic region (minus 10% for MWPA administration) and expected funding for Defensible Space (D-Space) and Local Wildfire Prevention Mitigation for each member agency. Note that this projection may differ from budgeted and actual numbers on the following page due to the number of low-income senior parcel tax exemptions received in a given year.

As the table shows, approximately \$10.6 MM has been allocated for Core Funding and \$3.9 MM each for D-space and Local Wildfire Prevention Mitigation.



| % | AGENCY | PROJECTED REVENUE | OPS AREA | REVENUE % | CORE MINUS ADMIN* | D-SPACE 20% | LOCAL 20% |
|--------|------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|---------------|------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 5.29% | City of Larkspur | \$1,041,443 | | | | \$208,289 | \$208,289 |
| 3.36% | Kentfield Fire District | \$662,503 | | | | \$132,501 | \$132,501 |
| 1.15% | Sleepy Hollow Fire District | \$227,224 | | | | \$45,445 | \$45,445 |
| 4.16% | Town of Corte Madera | \$818,649 | | | | \$163,730 | \$163,730 |
| 2.49% | Town of Fairfax | \$490,183 | | | | \$98,037 | \$98,037 |
| 1.38% | Town of Ross | \$270,824 | | | | \$54,165 | \$54,165 |
| 4.65% | Town of San Anselmo | \$915,777 | Central Marin | 22.43% | \$2,385,105.53 | \$183,155 | \$183,155 |
| 0.61% | Bolinas Fire District | \$119,529 | | | | \$23,906 | \$23,906 |
| 8.29% | County of Marin Fire* | \$1,632,405 | | | | \$326,481 | \$326,481 |
| 0.52% | Inverness Fire District | \$101,676 | | | | \$20,335 | \$20,335 |
| 0.68% | Stinson Beach Fire District | \$133,722 | West Marin | 5.97% | \$635,314.10 | \$26,744 | \$26,744 |
| 24.54% | Novato Fire District | \$4,833,323 | Novato | 24.17% | \$2,570,535.81 | \$966,665 | \$966,665 |
| 23.63% | City of San Rafael | \$4,653,581 | | | | \$930,716 | \$930,716 |
| 1.67% | Marinwood CSD | \$328,228 | San Rafael | 28.89% | \$3,072,613.55 | \$65,646 | \$65,646 |
| 6.03% | City of Mill Valley | \$1,187,728 | | | | \$237,546 | \$237,546 |
| 0.15% | Muir Beach CSD | \$30,351 | | | | \$6,070 | \$6,070 |
| 11.42% | Southern Marin Fire District | \$2,248,673 | Southern Marin | 18.54% | \$1,971,477.09 | \$449,735 | \$449,735 |
| | Total | \$19,695,819 | | 100% | \$10,635,046.08 | \$3,939,164 | \$3,939,164 |

*The agency-projected revenue totals within an Ops Areas do not add up directly to the total Core funding for that Ops Areas. The Marin County Fire Department has revenue generation in all five of the Ops Areas. A tax levy analysis has been used to determine the actual revenue for each Ops Area, which is denoted in the “Core minus Admin” column of the table.

FY 2020/21 REVENUE & EXPENDITURES

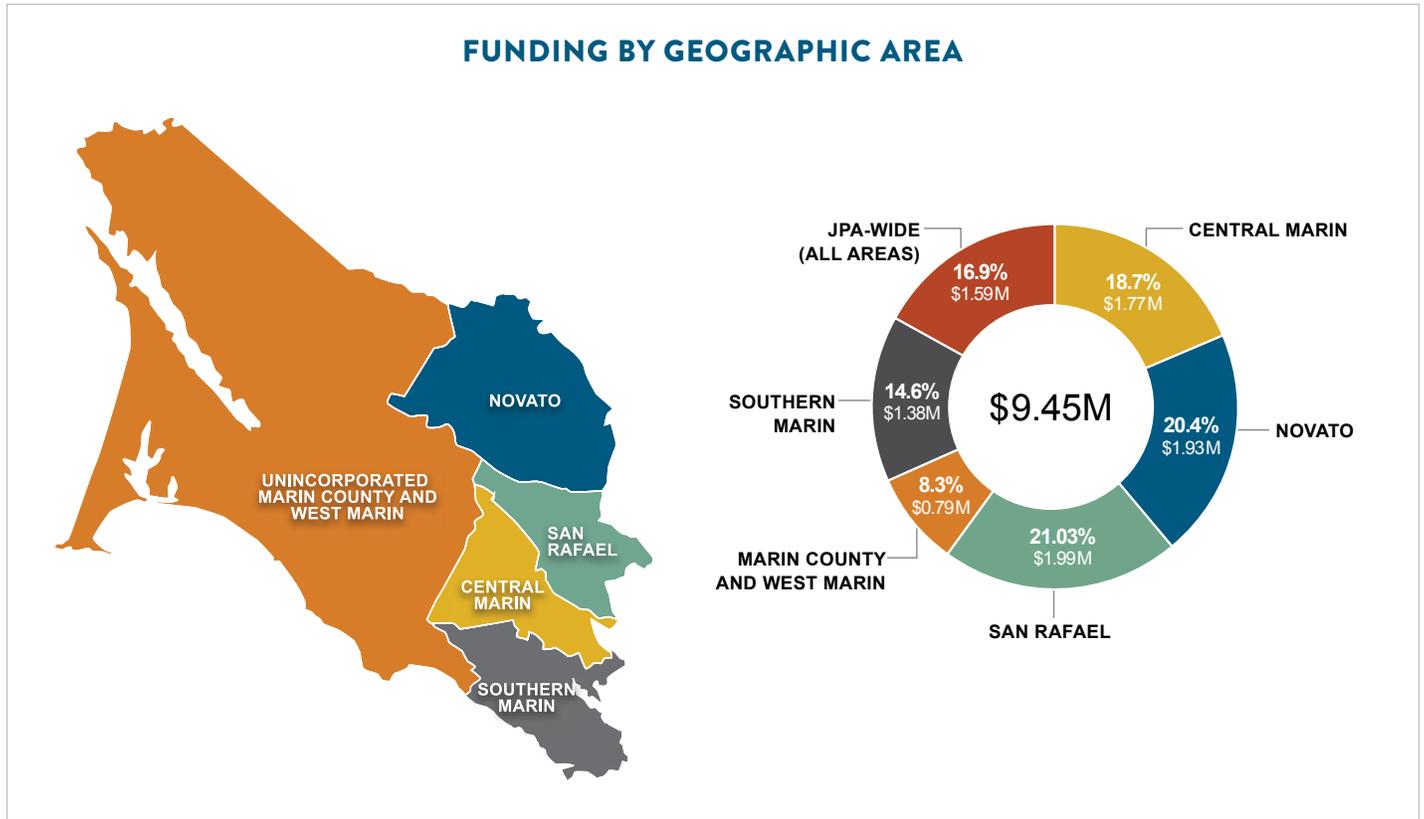
This table summarizes actual versus budgeted expenditures of the Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority (MWPA) for the 2020/21 fiscal year ending June 30. MWPA received approximately \$337,720 more in Measure C parcel tax revenue than estimated and spent

\$1.2 million less than anticipated due to the number of ready projects and staffing to support those projects in the organization's first year of operations. As a result, MWPA begins its second fiscal year in a strong financial position for achieving the goals of the 2021/22 Work Plan.

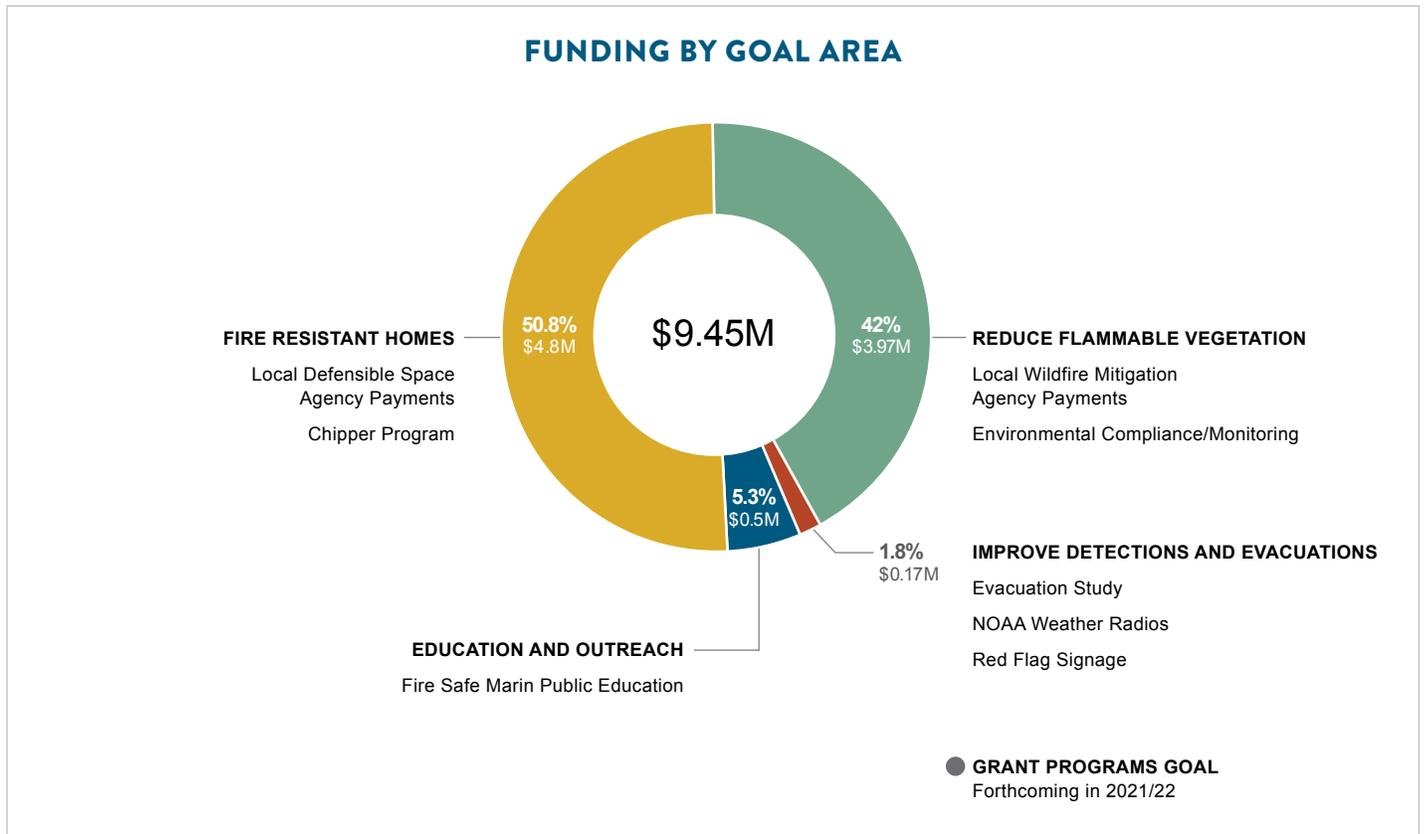
| REVENUE | ACTUAL THRU JUNE 30, 2021 | BUDGET | \$ OVER BUDGET | % OF BUDGET |
|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Measure C | 19,663,417.74 | 19,325,698 | 337,720 | 102% |
| County Interest | 8,109.77 | 0 | 8,110 | 100% |
| TOTAL REVENUE | 19,671,527.51 | 19,325,698 | 345,830 | 102%* |
| EXPENDITURES | | | | |
| Core Program: Cross-Jurisdictional | | | | |
| Environmental Compliance/Monitoring | 43,357.40 | 150,000 | -106,643 | 29% |
| Evacuation Study | 134,187.50 | 1,000,000 | -865,813 | 13% |
| Fire Safe Marin Chipper Program | 874,310.70 | 1,070,000 | -195,689 | 82% |
| Fire Safe Marin NOAA Weather Radios | 28,948.00 | 35,000 | -6,052 | 83% |
| Fire Safe Marin Public Education | 502,441.41 | 560,000 | -57,559 | 90% |
| Fire Safe Marin Red Flag Signage | 9,977.25 | 10,000 | -23 | 100% |
| Total Core Program | 1,593,222.26 | 2,825,000 | -1,231,778 | 56% |
| Defensible Space Program | | | | |
| Defensible Space Agency Payments | 3,929,608.37 | 3,865,140 | 64,468 | 102% |
| Total Defensible Space Program | 3,929,608.37 | 3,865,140 | 64,468 | 102%* |
| Local Wildfire Mitigation Program | | | | |
| Local Wildfire Mitigation Agency Payments | 3,929,608.39 | 3,865,140 | 64,468 | 102% |
| Total Local Wildfire Mitigation Program | 3,929,608.39 | 3,865,140 | 64,468 | 102%* |
| Administrative Costs | | | | |
| Financial & Admin Services | 106,384.44 | 106,384.44 | 0 | 100% |
| Legal Services | 155,697.92 | 150,000 | 5,698 | 104% |
| Personnel | 255,857.96 | 400,000 | -144,142 | 64% |
| Services & Supplies | 99,873.25 | 85,000 | 14,873 | 117% |
| Start Up Costs | 235,554.25 | 250,000 | -14,446 | 94% |
| Total Administrative Costs | 853,367.82 | 991,384 | -138,016 | 86% |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURES | 10,305,806.84 | 11,546,664 | -1,240,857 | 89% |
| NET EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) | 9,365,720.67 | 7, 779,034 | | |

* The actual Measure C property tax revenue exceeded the estimated revenue. The additional revenue was passed through to the member agencies' respective Defensible Space and Local Wildfire Mitigation Programs. Additionally, 2% of the Defensible Space Agency Payments will be withheld in an abatement program.

FUNDING BY GEOGRAPHIC AREA



FUNDING BY GOAL AREA



THE ROAD AHEAD: MWPA WORK PLAN

MWPA OPERATIONS (OPS) AND ADVISORY/ TECHNICAL (A/T C) COMMITTEES

In Year One, the Ops Committee, in conjunction with the A/T C, spent a significant amount of time developing a system for prioritizing the backlog of needed projects to produce MWPA's first Work Plan for the "Core Budget" covering cross-jurisdictional projects (60% of funds).

Meanwhile, the 17 member agencies recommended local defensible space/home hardening projects (20% of funds) and fire mitigation projects (20% of funds) to their respective councils and boards.

Using the Marin Community Wildfire Protection Plan, consistency with the voter-approved Measure C language, and locally developed "areas of concern" as a framework, the Committees identified 111 priority proposals, projects and programs totaling \$18 million in spending in the 2021/22 fiscal year.

The Upcoming Year

In the 2021/22 fiscal year, MWPA plans to:

- Initiate 111 projects and programs detailed in the Work Plan (see sidebar), including the implementation of a robust environmental review process
- Develop grant programs to assist residents in reducing fire risks
- Develop financial and program partnerships and grants with Federal, state, and local entities to augment the effectiveness of MWPA programs and projects
- Initiate a countywide road-level evacuation risk assessment
- Begin comprehensively monitoring measurable objectives and adapting strategies based on program and project effectiveness

