RESOLUTION - ACTION REQUESTED 2012-262

MEETING: May 22, 2012

TO: The Board of Supervisors

FROM: Rick Benson, County Administrative Officer

RE: Master Gardener Program Funding

RECOMMENDATION AND JUSTIFICATION: Tentatively Approve the Continued Use of Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act of 2000 (SR 2008) Funds for Funding an Extra-Help Employee to Manage the Master Gardener Program with Direction to Staff to Notice the Proposal and Begin the 45-Day Comment Period. Staff is requesting continued funding in the amount of $19,000 for the next Fiscal Year, July 1, 2012, through June 30, 2013.

Approved Title III projects are (1) activities under the Firewise Communities program (similar to Fire Safe Councils); (2) reimbursement for search and rescue, and other emergency services performed on Federal land; (3) develop community wildfire protection plans in coordination with the appropriate Secretary concerned. Before final approval by the Board of Supervisors, the funding proposal requires a 45-day comment period after being published in the publication of local record.

Staff is requesting continued funding for one fiscal year in the amount of $19,000 to fund the Extra-Help employee that manages the Master Gardener Program. The Master Gardener Program will conduct workshops and outreach events that will provide information on “firescaping,” incorporating fire-resistant plants into landscaping designs, reducing invasive weeds, and keeping property fire safe. Volunteers will be available in both Mariposa and Greeley Hill on a weekly basis to answer questions and provide informational material. The Master Gardener program will work cooperatively with the Mariposa County Fire Safe Council to ensure consistent messaging in distributed pertaining to preventing the threat of wildfire. This proposal meets the criteria to receive Title III funding. Attached is a copy of the Master Gardener proposal that provides greater detail.

After the completion of the 45-day comment period the Board will then be asked to review any comments received and formally approve the use of Title III funds for this proposal. Expenditures and a corresponding offset in revenue have been included in the Fiscal Year 2012-13 Requested Budget pending the Board’s approval.

The County received $26,400 this fiscal year for use on Title III projects, and unless the legislation is reauthorized this will be the final year that the County will receive this funding. There is currently an uncommitted balance of $74,500 in the Forest
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Reserve Fund. It should be noted that any funds not committed by September 2012, must be returned to the United States Treasury.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY OF BOARD ACTIONS: On September 20, 2011, the Board adopted Resolution 11-454 approving the use of Title III funding in an amount of $18,800 for the Master Gardener Program for Fiscal Year 2011-12.

ALTERNATIVES AND CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION: Do not tentatively approve the continued use of Title III funding for the Master Gardener Program. Staff will not notice the proposal. Other proposals that meet the funding criteria will be need to be solicited or the funding will have to returned to the United States Treasury.

ATTACHMENTS:
Title III Funds Proposal - Master Gardener 2012  (PDF)

CAO RECOMMENDATION
Requested Action Recommended

Rick Benson, County Administrator/Title

RESULT:  ADOPTED BY CONSENT VOTE [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:  Jim Allen, District V Supervisor
SECONDER: Lyle Turpin, District II Supervisor
AYES:  Stetson, Turpin, Bibby, Cann, Allen