RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

**OF THE COUNTY OF SISKIYOU CONTINUING ITS DECLARATION OF A WILDFIRE EMERGENCY**

 **WHEREAS**, catastrophic wildfires have become a significant issue in California, destroying property, homes, natural resources, and lives every year, and

**WHEREAS**, on September 2nd, 2014, with the passage of Resolution No. 14-154, the Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors ("Board") declared a state of emergency in Siskiyou County due to the actual and perceived threat of wildfire in California, and

 **WHEREAS**, on December 10, 2019, with the passage of Resolution No. 19-159, the Board confirmed the ongoing state of emergency in Siskiyou County due to the threat of wildfire in California, and

 **WHEREAS**, on June 1, 2021, with the passage of Resolution No. 21-77, the Board confirmed the ongoing state of emergency in Siskiyou County due to the threat of wildfire in California, and

**WHEREAS**, on August 10, 2021, with the passage of Resolution 21-118, the Board confirmed the ongoing state of emergency in Siskiyou County due to the threat of wildfire in California, and

**WHEREAS**, this Resolution passed today, will supersede and replace Resolution No. 21-118, and

 **WHEREAS**, wildfire seasons are growing longer and progressively more destructive, with wildfires throughout Siskiyou County over the last six years burning 1,091,777 acres, destroying 1,001 homes and structures, and taking the lives of 10 people, and

**WHEREAS**, the cost of wildfire in Siskiyou County over the last six years has been hundreds of millions of dollars in fire suppression, lost timber, and lost critical infrastructure, which directly impacts community lifelines, and

 **WHEREAS**, the cost to our environment and wildlife, and the loss of lives cannot be measured, but has a significant impact on our communities, our economy and our rural county government, and

**WHEREAS**, wildfire and the resulting smoke impact people’s health and decreases tourism; in the summer of 2020 in Siskiyou County, with an Air Quality Index (AQI) of over 400 daily and peaking at over 500, breathing air was equivalent to smoking ten cigarettes a day leading to health issues for our residents with extremely unhealthy days from July to October, and

**WHEREAS**, catastrophic wildfire affects Siskiyou County residents beyond those impacts listed above; public utilities, including Pacific Power, have had to adopt and implement plans to shut off power during high wind and fire vulnerability events, and

**WHEREAS**, Siskiyou County is home to more than 2.5 million acres of federally managed land, which is 62% of the total land in the County, and

**WHEREAS**, the management of lands, particularly regarding forest protection and fuels reduction in National Forests is wholly inadequate, has long been ignored, and is significantly underfunded, placing Siskiyou County and its residents in significant peril and at great risk should a catastrophic wildfire occur, and

**WHEREAS**, many of the areas burned in Siskiyou County were included in proposed projects by the United States Forest Service but were blocked by “environmental” appeals and lawsuits, and

**WHEREAS**, access to and on Forest Service roads is critical to the suppression of wildfires, however, Forest Service roads are frequently closed, and more often not maintained for many reasons, including budget limitations, and threats of lawsuit from activist groups, and

**WHEREAS**, water diversions to fill stock ponds are important in assisting to suppress wildfire, as was evident during the 2024 Shelly Fire when stock ponds were used by helicopters to draft from, and

**WHEREAS**, irrigated fields can assist in firefighting activities by providing a natural barrier to prevent wildfire spread, and

**WHEREAS,** the State Water Resources Control Board suspended Scott River irrigation curtailments during the Shelly Fire, however, the County is concerned that continued water curtailments will negatively impact efforts to suppress future wildfires, and

**WHEREAS**, acres that are curtailed are often interspersed with rural-residential and urban interface, and when curtailed these fallow fields and dry vegetation pose an imminent threat to the safety of homes and people, and

**WHEREAS**, as part of the Environmental Impact Statement that was developed for the Kidder Creek Orchard Camp Zone Change and Use Permit, the Forest Service modeled fire starts in Scott Valley along Highway 3, and

**WHEREAS**, the first scenario modeled fire behavior when lands are irrigated and the second scenario modeled fire behavior when lands are not irrigated, and the results demonstrated that there was a marginal threat of fire spread within the first three hours of the model run with irrigated fields, and there was a significant threat of fire spread, and threat to communities, within the first three hours of the model run with non-irrigated fields, and

**WHEREAS**, there continues to be a widely recognized extremely high risk of catastrophic wildfire in Siskiyou County with hotter drier conditions occurring earlier and, due to unnaturally heavy fuel accumulation and the early drying of vegetation, and

**WHEREAS**, the dense vegetation conditions of local National Forests constitute an ongoing public safety concern, and

**WHEREAS**, the County opposes managed fire response wherever the fire start and anticipated fire spread is within the influence of a community at risk and thus, supports immediate aggressive fire suppression, and

 **WHEREAS**, the elected and appointed officials of both the State and the nation have an obligation to preserve public safety and protect the citizenry and their homes and businesses by ensuring that the landscape is as fire-resilient as possible and that firefighting efforts are as effective and as safe as possible for firefighters, and

**WHEREAS**, the Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors calls for immediate measures to be taken to prevent imminent catastrophic wildfires.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, DETERMINED, AND ORDERED** by the Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors that there is an ongoing emergency due to the threat of wildfire in California.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Board of Supervisors 1) urges the Forest Service to actively manage federal lands to be resilient to wildfire through prescribed fire, forest thinning, timber harvest, and the removal of fine fuels, and 2) urges the Forest Service to open closed roads, keep roads open, and maintain roads on a regular basis to aid in forest management activities, and in the suppression of wildfires.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Board of Supervisors continues to urge the Governor to take an active role at the state and federal level to demand that the United States Forest Service take action in California’s federal forested land to do the prevention and maintenance work necessary to mitigate the ongoing and increasing risk of catastrophic wildfire. And, the Board urges the Governor to recognize the negative impacts water curtailments have on 1) the landscape, drying out broad swaths of vegetation in Siskiyou County and increasing its flammability, and 2) the suppression of wildfires, and terminate Executive Order N-7-22 as amended by Executive Order N-5-23.

**PASSED AND ADOPTED** by the Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors on September 3, 2024, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

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 Michael N. Kobseff, Chair Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors

ATTEST:

LAURA BYNUM,

COUNTY CLERK

By \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Deputy