

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Capital Outlay Budget Change Proposal (COBCP) - Cover Sheet
 DF-151 (REV 07/19)

Fiscal Year 2020	Business Unit 3540	Department Department of Forestry and Fire Protection	Priority No. MA-11
Budget Request Name 3540-064-COBCP-2020-GB		Capital Outlay Program ID 2485	Capital Outlay Project ID (7 digits. For new projects leave blank) 0006682

Project Title Kneeland Helitack Base: Replace Facility	Project Status and Type Status: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Continuing Type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Major <input type="checkbox"/> Minor
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Project Category (Select one) <input type="checkbox"/> CRI (Critical Infrastructure) <input type="checkbox"/> WSD (Workload Space Deficiencies) <input type="checkbox"/> ECP (Enrollment Caseload Population) <input type="checkbox"/> SM (Seismic) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FLS (Fire Life Safety) <input type="checkbox"/> FM (Facility Modernization) <input type="checkbox"/> PAR (Public Access Recreation) <input type="checkbox"/> RC (Resource Conservation)

Total Request (in thousands) \$850	Phase(s) to be Funded Acquisition	Estimated Total Project Cost (in thousands) \$18,285
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Budget Request Summary

The Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) requests \$850,000 General Fund for the acquisition phase of the Kneeland Helitack Base: Replace Facility project, to replace the current facility located in Humboldt County. This is a new project. Total estimated project cost is \$18,285,000.

Requires Legislation <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	Code Section(s) to be Added/Amended/Repealed	CCCI
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Requires Provisional Language <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	Budget Package Status <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needed <input type="checkbox"/> Not Needed <input type="checkbox"/> Existing
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Impact on Support Budget					
One-Time Costs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	Future Costs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Future Savings	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	Revenue	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

If proposal affects another department, does other department concur with proposal? Yes No
 Attach comments of affected department, signed and dated by the department director or designee.

Prepared By	Date	Reviewed By	Date
Department Director	Date	Agency Secretary	Date

Department of Finance Use Only	
Principal Program Budget Analyst Original Signed By Andrea Scharffer	Date submitted to the Legislature 01/10/2020

A. COBCP Abstract:

Background

The Kneeland Helitack Base (Kneeland HB) is in Kneeland, California, in Humboldt County.

CAL FIRE obtained authorization in the Budget Act of 2014 to fund, staff, and support to replace the current “ad-hoc” arrangement with a new/permanent CAL FIRE helitack base. Funding was authorized to operate the helitack base consistent with the Blue Book, including one helitender as well as lease costs for a temporary facility necessary to house personnel. Preliminary discussions have been made with the land owner who is interested in selling the property to the State for resource preservation and fire protection purposes. Tactically and logistically, the site is the best option for relocation, as it is further inland and would increase the sphere of influence to respond to incidents, would reduce the impact of coastal fog during operations, increase the availability of the helicopters for nearby units, provide enough useable ground to build the new helitack base, and has exceptional approach and departure paths.

This project is to relocate the helitack base on property the State plans on acquiring. The project includes construction of a helicopter hangar, support vehicle garage, 22-bed barracks building, generator/pump/storage building, wash rack canopy, hazmat/retardant storage and helicopter training tower. Additionally, the scope will include site work as needed. Total project costs currently estimated include the acquisition phase (\$850,000), preliminary plans (\$1,228,000), working drawings (\$1,228,000), and construction (\$14,979,000).

B. Purpose of the Project:

Problem

The Kneeland HB, constructed in 1982 on over four acres of State-owned land, is in Humboldt County adjacent to the Humboldt County Airport in Kneeland, 22 miles south east of Eureka and 24 miles from the coastline. Kneeland HB is a rural Humboldt County-owned airstrip that is not controlled by an on-site Federal Aviation Administration tower. The primary mission of the Kneeland HB is to provide a rapid aerial response to emergencies including fires, flood, and medical incidents in the northwest corner of the State and as needed throughout the State. The closest helitack bases are Howard Forest HB, 100 miles to the south, Vina HB, 114 miles to southeast, and Bieber HB, 150 miles to the east. The base staffs one helicopter year-round with a pilot and one to four fire captains, and from May through October a crew of 12 firefighters, and up to 17 personnel at the HB. During an average year, the helicopter will fly 350 hours, responding to over 160 fires, at least 20 medical emergencies and medical short haul rescues, and will log more than 5,900 personnel hours. The Kneeland helicopter transports fire crews to inaccessible areas and then provides retardant support. The expansion of Kneeland HB at its current location is limited by the county airport to the south and by the steep sloping landscape to the north, which is privately owned ranch property.

The current location and site of the Kneeland HB pose two distinct issues for CAL FIRE, requiring its relocation/replacement.

The current location of the Kneeland HB is in the northern region of California (Humboldt County) and is operated by CAL FIRE for helicopter-derived resources, used in achieving the Department’s overall mission. This region of northern California receives an average rainfall of 47 inches per year and that, combined with its proximity to the coast, causes Kneeland HB to experience limited visibility due to frequent fog and low clouds. CAL FIRE helicopters cannot fly

in fog or clouds due to poor visibility. Helicopters fly under visual flight rules because the aircraft are not equipped to fly under instrument flight rules. Unlike airlines, a pilot must be able to see where he is flying, because he cannot use instruments to fly in the fog. Frequently our aircraft are unable to return to Kneeland HB due to fog creating a lack of visibility and are diverted to either Rohnerville Air Attack Base (approximately 39 miles southwest of Kneeland HB), Eel River Conservation Camp (approximately 53 miles southeast of Kneeland HB) or the Redding Airport (approximately 80 miles east). The Helicopter crew then rents hotels in Fortuna, Garberville, or Redding for lodging until visibility is restored and the aircraft can return to base.

C. Relationship to the Strategic Plan:

This project relates to the following goals in the CAL FIRE 2019 Strategic Plan:

Goal 1: Improve Our Core Capabilities

Objective: The CAL FIRE mission includes provisions for an all-hazard response capability for the Aviation Program. The State has committed to the replacement of the current rotor wing fleet, critical infrastructure improvements, and an increase in staffing at all levels to include program management and oversight. CAL FIRE's Fire Protection Program is currently in the process of procuring several helicopters to replace the Department's current aging helicopter fleet. Replacement of the first helicopter began in 2019.

D. Alternatives:

1. Construct new helitack base on acquired property.

Advantages

- The proposed site for acquisition is currently located in an area that would provide adequate access and increased sphere of influence to respond quickly to incidents. The proposed site is strategically located and is large enough to construct the necessary facilities.
- Will implement legislatively revised operations and staffing plan to add the new CAL FIRE helitack base.
- New helitack base facilities will increase the efficiency of CAL FIRE personnel which will save on operations cost and provide for faster initial attack responses.
- Construction of proposed facilities will allow for CAL FIRE personnel to meet strategic goals and operations schedules.
- Will decrease the dependence and reduce the burden on the Federal and Local Government partners with fire protection by providing more rapid initial attack and longer operations time with the new helicopter.

Disadvantages

- This alternative has no disadvantages.

2. Do nothing & continue with

Advantages

current facilities.

- Capital Outlay funds will not be spent.

Disadvantages

- The efficiency of CAL FIRE personnel will suffer without proper facilities which increase operations cost and provide for slower initial attack responses still affected by coastal fog.
- The burden will continue for the federal government for initial and extended attack operations.

E. Recommended Solution:

1. Which alternative and why?

Alternative #1, replacing the helitack base facility is the preferred alternative. It is the most cost-effective solution while meeting operational requirements and providing infill development on State lands.

2. Detailed scope description.

Design and construction of the new Kneeland HB will include the following:

- Multi-blade capable Helicopter Hangar
- 2 Lighted Helipads
- 3-Bay Support Vehicle Garage/Shop
- 22-Bed Barracks Building
- Generator/Pump/Storage building
- Vehicle wash rack
- Hazmat/Retardant storage building
- Helicopter Training Tower
- Site work as needed

3. Basis for cost information.

The cost is based on a DGS helitack base projects at Vina, Bieber, and Prado with updates provided by CAL FIRE.

4. Factors/benefits for recommended solution other than the least expensive alternative.

The recommended solution is driven by the need to effectively deliver reliable critical emergency response resources to the State of California and meet the program requirements.

5. Complete description of impact on support budget.

New furniture will need to be purchased. Maintenance and repair costs for the new facility will be low at the beginning of its 50-year lifespan, but the new systems are more technologically advanced than the existing facility and will not need to be constantly updated to provide adequate fire suppression response.

6. Identify and explain any project risks.

There are no risks associated with completion of this project.

7. List requested interdepartmental coordination and/or special project approval (including mandatory reviews and approvals, e.g. technology proposals).

Caltrans-Division of Aeronautics, Department of General Services-Division of the State Architect, CAL FIRE-Office of the State Fire Marshal.

F. Consistency with Government Code Section 65041.1:

1. Does the recommended solution (project) promote infill development by rehabilitating existing infrastructure and how?

Yes, the recommended solution replaces infrastructure adjacent to an existing site.

2. Does the project improve the protection of environmental and agricultural resources by protecting and preserving the state's most valuable natural resources? Explain.

Yes, the new helitack base will meet and enhance the operational logistics to fly the new helicopter and crew quickly in response to emergencies, natural disasters and provide initial attack on fires, thereby protecting property and natural resources of the State of California.

3. Does the project encourage efficient development patterns by ensuring that infrastructure associated with development, other than infill, support efficient use of land and is appropriately planned for growth?

Yes. CAL FIRE facilities are strategically located to meet the Department's mission. To the maximum extent possible, CAL FIRE prefers to develop close to existing roads, water, sewer, and other utilities to promote efficient development in the area and to mitigate future support costs for facility maintenance. Project planning requires compliance with local government planning models. The growth-inducement potential is one of the potential environmental impacts addressed in the CEQA process.