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MEDIA RELEASE  
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## **San Benito gets \$758,000 for wildfire resilience**

Hollister, CA – The State Coastal Conservancy approved in June spending \$758,000 for a San Benito Wildfire Regional Prioritization Plan. Widespread collaboration across the county, as well as neighboring counties, will result in a plan to manage the ecological balance of fire while reducing risk for people.

“This grant will not only make residents of San Benito safer in the long run, but also protect valuable natural resources, such as the Pajaro River and San Benito River Watersheds,” said project lead Barb Satink Wolfson, UC Cooperative Extension fire advisor for San Benito, Monterey, Santa Cruz and Santa Clara counties.

An update of the Community Wildfire Protection Plan is included in the scope of this project. Several “ready to go” on-the-ground projects – such as wildfire hazard reduction treatments and prescribed fire – will result from this planning process. To encourage community input, the project calls for five public meetings to be held with county residents.



*Prescribed burn in San Juan Bautista from the June 2023 Training Exchange hosted by the Central Coast Prescribed Burn Association.*

The RPP grant includes:

- Funds for the San Benito Resource Conservation District (SBRCD) to hire a staff member to assist with the RPP and expand their capacity to help the community address fire-related issues.
- Funds for the San Benito Agricultural Land Trust (SBALT) to hire a new staff member to assist with the RPP and expand their capacity to address fire-related issues within conservation easements and properties.
- Funds for the Amah Mutsun Land Trust to assist with identifying areas of cultural significance.
- Travel funds for San Benito Fire Safe Council members, SBRCD and/or SBALT staff to attend the annual Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Conference in Reno, Nevada, in March 2024.
- Funds for up to 40 stipends to offset the costs of attending meetings and/or workshops for those with working lands so they can contribute to the RPP.
- Funds for up to 100 travel reimbursements to help offset community members' travel costs to attend meetings and/or workshops so they can contribute to the RPP.
- Funds to develop priority projects, including environmental review.
- Funds for Spanish translation.

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