

Butte in line for fire safety grants

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Some wildfires in Butte County may be easier to fight if the Sierra Nevada Conservancy approves two grants June 7.

Grant evaluators at the conservancy recommended two projects from the Butte County Fire Safe Council for a combined \$271,000 of funding last week, according to an email from the council.

The projects up for funding include a brush clearing program in Little Butte Creek forest, which calls for the removal of excess brush to preserve the "natural mosaic" of the area. That project is recommended for \$84,000 of funding.

The other project, called Forbestown Fuel Break, also calls for the removal of brush near Feather Falls, Forbestown and Brownsville. That project is recommended for \$187,000 of funding.

Both would help in fighting fires by reducing fuel in the forest.

Calli Jane-Burch, the director of the Butte Fire Safe Council, was thrilled when she learned the projects were under consideration for grant funds, she said.

"We were very amazed," Jane-Burch said. The projects were recommended because they met all of the criteria that the conservancy was aiming for, said Chris Dallas, the grant project manager who worked with the Fire Safe Council during the proposal process.

"They're definitely good projects," Dallas said. In the past, the council has submitted grants to the conservancy and been turned down, Jane-Burch said. One of the programs, a wood chipping service for people who want to clear flammable brush, wasn't funded.

"We had people calling and requesting people to come help them," Jane-Butch said. The chipper program has since been restored and is available for anyone who wants to reduce hazardous brush until June 15, Jane-Burch said.

The fee is \$30.