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# WILDFIRE MITIGATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

## Meeting Minutes – Tuesday, June 21, 2022

Posted 7/6/2022

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### Committee Members Present

Curtis Brown, Department of Forestry and Fire Protection  
Daniel Berlant, Office of the State Fire Marshal  
Caroline Thomas Jacobs, Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety  
J. Lopez, California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection  
Robert Troy and Ryan Buras, Governor's Office of Emergency Services  
Deborah Halberstadt, California Department of Insurance (Virtual)  
Clay Kerchof, Governor's Office of Planning and Research (Virtual)  
Jessica Martinez, California Fire Safe Council (Virtual)  
Roy Wright, Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety  
Ray Gayk and Chris Tubbs, California Fire Chiefs Association (Virtual)  
Lenya N. Quinn-Davidson, University of California Cooperative Extension (Virtual)  
Maziar Movassaghi, Department of Housing and Community Development  
Staci Heaton, Rural County Representatives of California  
Sean McGlynn, League of California Cities  
Catherine Freeman, California State Association of Counties  
Karen Buhr, California Association of Resource Conservation Districts  
Don Hankins, Professor, CSU Chico (Virtual)

### Members Absent

Department of Conservation  
Representative from the Building Industry  
California Fire Science Consortium

### CAL FIRE Staff in Attendance

Steve Hawks, Acting Assistant Deputy Director  
Frank Bigelow, Staff Chief  
Jim McDougald, Staff Chief  
Matt Damon, Deputy Chief, Land Use Planning Program (Virtual)  
Jamie Lydersen, FRAP Senior Environmental Scientist (Virtual)  
Carmel Barnhart, Assistant Chief - Subdivision Review (Virtual)  
Jeff Fuentes, Assistant Chief - Utility Wildfire Mitigation (Virtual)  
Kara Garrett, Associate Governmental Program Analyst

## 1. CALL TO ORDER 1:00 PM

### A. Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 PM by Daniel Berlant.

Daniel Berlant

### B. Roll Call – Kara Garrett

Quorum Established with seventeen committee members present, six of which attending virtually.

C. Approval of Past Meeting Minutes (**Motion Required**) – Daniel Berlant

- a. Caroline Thomas Jacobs mentioned two corrections to the May 17 meeting minutes. The two corrections are as follows: on page three, amending B – 2 to read “this workgroup is developing a utility risk model that will inform the other group.” Second amendment is on page seven to correct “utilize” to utilities”.

<b>Motion:</b>	J. Lopez moved to accept the meeting agenda as amended, Don Hankins seconded the motion.
<b>Action:</b>	All members voted to unanimously to approve the motion.

D. Agenda Review (**Motion Required**) – Daniel Berlant

<b>Motion:</b>	Caroline Thomas Jacobs moved to accept the meeting agenda as amended, Curtis Brown seconded the motion.
<b>Action:</b>	All members voted to unanimously to approve the motion.

**2. OLD BUSINESS**

**Daniel Berlant / Steve Hawks**

**A. Risk Modeling**

a. Draft Charter Updates

- i. Please submit appointment letters if you have not already done so by June 24<sup>th</sup>.
- ii. Current Draft is on the Wildfire Mitigation Advisory Committee Website at <https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/boards-committees/wildfire-mitigation-advisory-committee/>

**B. Division Reports**

a. Wildfire Risk Reduction Programs:

- i. Defensible Space Program:
  - 1. 80+ thousand DSpace inspections complete 17 thousand ahead of last year due to increased funding and permanent staffing.
- ii. Home Hardening Program:
  - 1. New Home Hardening Assistant Chief Dennis O’Neil.
- iii. Damage Inspection Program:
  - 1. First Damage Inspector Manager (DINM) class was taught June 1st. More classes to come in the near future.
  - 2. New Defensible Space Assistant Chief Heather McCulley.
- iv. Burn Permit Program:
  - 1. Online burn permit application and web interface out to select Units for user acceptance testing. Plan is to roll this out Jan 1, 2023. CAL FIRE has also partnered with the California Air Resources Board (CARB) on this.

- a. Question, J. Lopez Board of Forestry –

- i. Are these programs mentioned in the CAL FIRE Vegetation Treatment Program (VTP)?
            - 1. Potentially for the agency agriculture permits for other agencies, they used to apply for an LE 5 and will now be known as an Agency Ag Burn Permit, they may be using the VTP. If CAL FIRE is conducting the burn, we will be using the FC 400 process. The online burn permit is still in testing, but it will be a component in utilizing the VTP.
  - v. Utility Wildfire Mitigation Program:
    - 1. Completed Powerline Fire Prevention training with Defensible Space Inspectors (DSI) during the statewide DSI training. Idea being to cross-train them on how to spot and report powerline hazards related PRC 4292 (pole clearance) and PRC 4293 (conductor clearance) during defensible space inspections.
    - 2. In coordination with the Investor-Owned Utilities (IOUs), the Powerline Fire Prevention Field Guide is being produced as a Pocket Guide. The Pocket Guide contains photographs of powerline equipment used by Utilities and CAL FIRE in identifying exempt and non-exempt equipment in the field. The document is at the print phase currently.
    - 3. Continue to assist the Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety with the 2022 Wildfire Mitigation Plan Reviews for the IOUs.
    - 4. Participating in IOU Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) Exercises in preparation for any 2022 PSPS events.
- b. Wildfire Planning and Statistics Programs:
  - i. Pre-Fire Planning Program:
    - 1. Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) – FHSZ pilot unit and scientific review was completed in May. FRAP is making small changes to the model and some modifications to the model inputs. The Statewide SRA map will be created by the end of June with an anticipated statewide unit review beginning July 12<sup>th</sup>, units will have a month to complete this review.
    - 2. Completed Unit Fire Plans are being reviewed at the Region level.
    - 3. Development of the CalMAPPER mobile application continues.
  - ii. California Incident Data and Statistics Program:
    - 1. CalStats staff have completed the draft of the 2021 Redbook. The Redbook will now go through the review and approval process before being posted on the department's website.
- a. Community Wildfire Mitigation Assistance Programs:
  - i. Land Use Planning Program:
    - i. Land Use Planning/Safety Elements:
      - 1. Still numerous Safety Element Assessments (SEA) moving forward statewide, two SEAs were presented at the June Board of Forestry and Fire Protection's Resource Protection Committee meeting with several more likely to be presented in July.
      - 2. Working on filling some staffing vacancies in Sacramento.
  - ii. Fire Safe Regulations:

1. Look forward to seeing the process moving forward.
- iii. Subdivision Review:
  1. Numerous cities and counties in progress now, recent activity in San Diego County, amongst others, will be presented in the coming months.
- iv. Firewise USA:
  1. 525 communities in good standing, more than 250 in progress.
  2. Staff are fielding lots of inquiries statewide.
  3. Staff are engaged in numerous other ongoing activities including: OSFM Statutes and Regulations class, OPR Best Practices Inventory, training for local planners, and FHSZ map update.
- b. Wildfire Prevention Grants:
  - i. On June 1<sup>st</sup>, we announced that 144 applications for nearly \$118 million in Wildfire Prevention Grants have been awarded for Fiscal Year (FY) 2021/22.
  - ii. The CAL FIRE Grants Management Unit will begin to work with the awardees to establish the grant agreements.

### C. Fire Hazard Severity Zones

- a. Adoption Process:
  - SRA
    - i. Peer Review (Scientific & Operational Pilots) - NOW
    - ii. Unit / Contract County Review – July
    - iii. Public Hearings in Each County – Fall
    - iv. Adoption through Regulation – January 1, 2023
    - v. Question: Roy Wright
      1. As this goes out to public comment, the map areas of high hazard can only grow, does that mean that nothing can get smaller?
        - a. Yes, local jurisdictions can expand the zones within Local Responsibility Area (LRA) that they determine to be an equal fire hazard. There will also be a validation period to allow local jurisdictions to make updates to the inputs based on changes to land use and vegetation type.
      2. On the State Responsibility Area (SRA) side, what changes can be made as a result of the public comment?
        - a. The input data would be the most accurate and our assumption is that the public comments would be more narrative based versus something that would scientifically change the model.
      3. If someone proposed a scientific reason, will that change then be made?
        - a. Unit field review would have already occurred in the SRA map. The SRA map will probably not have the same amount of change.
    - vi. Question: Caroline Thomas Jacobs
      1. If things go according to plan, the idea is that they would be effective January 1?
        - a. Yes. That is the goal.

LRA

- i. Draft maps to be presented to local agency and receives local validation – Starting in Fall
  - ii. Final draft submitted to governing body of the local agency
  - iii. City / County has 30 days to set public comment and 120 to adopt through ordinance
  - iv. Local jurisdiction can add area not identified by CAL FIRE
- b. Timeline:
  - i. Current maps were developed in 2007-2010.
  - ii. Over the past several years staff have been building the new science model.
  - iii. Summer 2022 – Adopt map in SRA into regulation.
  - iv. Fall 2022 – Begin LRA remap
  - v. Question – Roy Wright, under statute, what if political figures choose to not vote yes to adopt this?
    - 1. Recent legislation sets timelines in the Government Code for local agencies to adopt the maps and then provide a copy of their ordinance to the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection within 120 days.
  - vi. Question – Sean McGlynn, is there a clock on the draft being sent out?
    - 1. Yes, the maps will have a phased roll out, but the plan is to provide a 30(ish) day validation period to the local agency.
    - 2. Sean raised workload concerns for local government and requested expanding communication when getting these out to get cities and counties.
  - vii. Question – Don Hankins, what efforts will there be to engage tribal review for the zones?
    - 1. It is up to the cities and counties to adopt. CAL FIRE staff will work to schedule an opportunity to meet with Don and others to discuss communicating the maps with tribal entities.

### 3. NEW BUSINESS

**Daniel Berlant / Steve Hawks**

- A. Wildfire Prevention Grants Program – Daniel Berlant / Steve Hawks
  - a. Funds fire prevention projects in and near fire threatened communities that focuses on increasing the protection of people, structures, and communities (Public Resources Code 4124.5)
  - b. Benefit to defined “Low-Income” and “Disadvantaged Communities”
  - c. Qualifying Project Types
    - i. Hazardous Fuel Reduction
    - ii. Wildfire Prevention Planning
    - iii. Wildfire Prevention Education
  - d. Eligible Entities
    - i. State Agencies
    - ii. Federal Agencies
    - iii. Native American Tribes
    - iv. Joint Powers Authority if entities involved are eligible applicants
    - v. Local agencies, including:
      - 1. City, county, or city and county
      - 2. Fire protection district

- 3. Community services districts
- 4. Water districts
- 5. Resource conservation districts
- 6. Special districts
- vi. Certified Community Conservation Corps
- vii. Fire Safe Councils and other nonprofit organizations with a 501(c)3 designation
- e. Grant Funding Availability
  - i. FY 2020-21 \$123 million + \$14.8 million
  - ii. FY 2021-22 \$118 million
  - iii. FY 2022-23 \$115 million in Governor's Proposed Budget
  - iv. FY 2023-24 \$117 million in Governor's Proposed Budget
  - v. Funding through FY 2028-29 (\$165 million to CAL FIRE)
- f. Grant Application Process
  - i. Application
  - ii. Scope of Work
  - iii. Budget Sheet
  - iv. Articles of Incorporation (AOI)
  - v. Board Resolution
  - vi. Various state forms
  - vii. Mapping component using online Esri webmap
- g. Open solicitation process is 2 months
- h. Review, Announcement, and Agreement Process
  - i. Grants Management Unit: 2 weeks
  - ii. Units/Contract Counties: 4 weeks
  - iii. Region: 4 weeks
  - iv. Sacramento: 1 week
  - v. Executive Review: 1 day
  - vi. Award Announcement: June 1, 2022
  - vii. Grant Agreements: 4 months
    - 1. Question – Caroline Thomas Jacobs, what is the marketing campaign to get it out to all of the constituents?
      - 1. CAL FIRE hosts workshops, at least two meetings that are open to the public and also do a media release through the department and the CA fire safe council puts it on their website. We also have an email distribution list through the CAL FIRE website that you can sign up for at <https://www.fire.ca.gov/grants/> and specifically at <https://fire.us8.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=1eab3f5545f6a6e4d33c94dcb&id=c330a569ca>
- i. Review, Announcement, and Agreement Process
  - i. Align with CAL FIRE Unit/Contract County Fire Plans
  - ii. Coordination with other grant opportunities through
    - 1. California Fire Safe Council Grants
    - 2. Cal OES FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program
    - 3. Housing and Community Development Federal HUD Grants

- 4. Others?
- iii. Contact us at [FPGrants@fire.ca.gov](mailto:FPGrants@fire.ca.gov)
  - 1. Northern Region [CNRgrants@fire.ca.gov](mailto:CNRgrants@fire.ca.gov)
  - 2. Southern Region [SouthernRegionGrantsProgram@fire.ca.gov](mailto:SouthernRegionGrantsProgram@fire.ca.gov)
    - 1. Question – Robert Troy, what is our definition of disadvantaged communities?
      - 1. It is CARB that defines that for us. There is mapping available to see where you are for this.
    - 2. Question – Catherine Freeman, for the people who are not making the cut, how do you work with them and help them? In the past CAL FIRE has worked with organizations that do not qualify but there are opportunities for them to partner with the other organizations that did qualify. Find the groups that are doing work in their local area and ask for help. We also look at how it ties to the local fire plan. If a stakeholder shows that they are already working with the unit, it is likely that the project will rank higher.
- B. IBHS Wildfire Prepared Home Presentation – Roy Wright / Anne Cope  
An overview of the new IBHS Prepared Home was presented.
- C. CDI Safer from Wildfires Presentation – Deborah Halberstadt  
An overview of the Department of Insurance’s Safer from Wildfires Program was presented.

**4. ROUNDTABLE**

**Daniel Berlant**

- A. There is a list of upcoming presentations for upcoming meetings.
  - a. Upcoming proposed topics, dates TBD:
    - i. Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force Update
    - ii. BOF 0–5-foot Zone 0 Regulations
    - iii. Department of Conservation’s Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program
    - iv. CAL FIRE/CalOES Home Hardening Retrofit Financial Assistance Program
    - v. Utility Wildfire Mitigation Plans – Caroline Thomas Jacobs Energy Safety (Possibly August)

Topic Suggestions for Next Meetings –

Link to Google Forms Suggestion Portal: <https://forms.gle/Wefg6YnrmUGYS8ua9>

**5. PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Daniel Berlant**

- A. No public comment.

**6. UPCOMING MEETING DATES FOR 2022**

**Daniel Berlant**

- A. Third Tuesday of each month starting at 1 PM and ending at 3 PM.
- B. Next meeting is July 19, 2022 in this room.

**7. MEETING ADJOURNED 2:59 PM**

**Daniel Berlant**