

# ***RANGE MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE***

## **STRATEGIC PLAN**



### **STATE BOARD OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION**

Revised: March 26, 2025

Approved: April 9, 2025

Chair: Dr. Marc Horney

Vice-Chair: Dr. Stephanie Larson

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*The Board's mission is to lead California in developing policies and programs that serve the public interest in environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable management of forest and rangelands, and a fire protection system that protects and serves the people of the state.*

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The purpose of Range Management Advisory Committee’s (RMAC) Strategic Plan is to identify and communicate the RMAC’s overarching priorities and goals, which guide the development of the RMAC’s annual objectives and activities. This provides a foundation for future tactical planning and maintain a high level of transparency with the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (‘Board’)—the RMAC’s appointing body—and the public. In addition to laying out the RMAC’s overarching priorities, the Strategic Plan documents the RMAC’s administration, procedures, funding sources, and mandated membership. The RMAC will review and update the Strategic Plan every five years and present it to the Board for approval.

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## I. DEFINITIONS

A **Rangeland** is land on which the existing vegetation, whether growing naturally or through management, is suitable for grazing and browsing. Rangeland includes any natural grasslands, savannas, shrublands, deserts, woodlands, and wetlands, which support a vegetative cover of native grasses, grass-like plants, forbs, shrubs or naturalized species. Rangeland is land dominated by vegetation other than trees. Many woodlands (including Eastside ponderosa pine, pinyon, juniper, chaparral, and oak) are included in rangelands because their response to range management principles and activities are similar to those of other shrubby ecosystems ([14 California Code of Regulations \[CCR\] § 1561.1](#)<sup>1</sup>).

California's rangelands support a variety of native plant and wildlife species, provide clean water, productive soil, carbon sequestration, open space, and help support rural economies. These ecosystem services are essential for maintaining habitat and wildlife in California, and healthy, managed rangelands are essential for preventing large fires and protecting communities.

There are over 57 million acres of grasslands, savannas, shrublands, deserts, wetlands, and woodlands that have sufficient vegetation cover as to be considered rangelands in California. There are also 32 million acres of forestland, some of which may be appropriate for grazing activities for a variety of goals related to fire and ecology (FRAP 2017). California's rangelands are currently threatened by several human and environmental impacts, including type conversion and land use change, invasive species, and impacts from climate change and wildfire. Other issues include the long-term financial viability of maintaining grazing on rangelands and data gaps that create challenges for policy development. Ongoing and emerging challenges are reviewed annually in the RMAC's Annual Report and Workplan (see the [RMAC's webpage](#)<sup>2</sup> for current [[RMAC 2025](#)] and past reports).

## II. ABOUT THE RANGE MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Range Management Advisory Committee (RMAC) is an advisory body to the Board, statutorily authorized by Public Resources Code (PRC) § 741 (see Appendix A: PRC § 741). A California range policy advisory body has existed in some form in the State since 1945, when the Board requested the appointment of the Range Improvement Advisory Committee (RIAC). The RIAC was established in 1946 to advise the Board on rangeland matters. In 1967 the RIAC was reconstructed and chartered with 11 voting members and nine non-voting technical consultants. The RIAC slipped into a period of dormancy and was reactivated and re-chartered as the RMAC in 1975. Legislation was introduced in 1984 to make the RMAC a statutory advisory body to the Board and the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA). Additional legislation in 1996 expanded its advisory role to include the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) and the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA). The Secretaries of the CNRA, CalEPA, and CDFA are required to notify, and encouraged to consult with, the RMAC on rangeland issues pursuant to PRC § 741.

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<sup>1</sup>

[https://govt.westlaw.com/calregs/Document/I49FFE8355B4D11EC976B000D3A7C4BC3?viewType=FullText&originatio nContext=documenttoc&transitionType=CategoryPageItem&contextData=\(sc.Default\)](https://govt.westlaw.com/calregs/Document/I49FFE8355B4D11EC976B000D3A7C4BC3?viewType=FullText&originatio nContext=documenttoc&transitionType=CategoryPageItem&contextData=(sc.Default))

<sup>2</sup> <https://bof.fire.ca.gov/board-committees/range-management-advisory-committee/>

### III. VISION AND VALUES

The vision of the RMAC is a resilient rangeland landscape in California that provides a diversity of ecosystem services to support the state's ecological and human health. To that end, the RMAC is guided by values that support long-term ecological, social, and economic sustainability:

- **Sustainable Solutions**

Approaches to range resource management must make economic sense, be socially and culturally acceptable, and ecologically regenerative to support the sustainable provisioning of the ecosystem services on which communities and the State rely. While tradeoffs are expected when determining management courses of action, consensus should generally be reached around the development and application of policies guiding the management of California rangelands.

- **Public Transparency**

A fully transparent, public process is built into the RMAC's activities. The RMAC conducts business in an open fashion that encourages stakeholder input and participation. The RMAC strives to produce rangeland guidance as needed developed with stakeholder input in mind and provides direction to publicly-accessible resources to support sustainable land management.

- **Flexible, Adaptive Management**

Ongoing inquiry informs management, and the RMAC recognizes that continued research and practice are critical to the development of sustainable solutions for rangeland management. The RMAC highlights research and programs designed to inform sustainable rangeland management and invites experts to speak at open public meetings of the RMAC. The RMAC recognizes that while policy regulations may constrain certain activities, the dynamic nature of rangelands, livestock operations, and markets necessitate flexibility in management to respond quickly to rapid environmental changes or market shifts. As such, the RMAC encourages adaptive management frameworks be built into the structure of policies, regulations, and programs governing rangelands in California. Moreover, the RMAC supports the translation of research findings to on-the-ground applications for management and regular incorporation of updated information into the development or revision of science-based policies and regulations.

### IV. MISSION

The mission of RMAC is to consider issues related to California's rangeland resources, provide recommendations on addressing them, facilitate strong relationships with local, state and federal agencies and develop solutions that are based on environmental, social, and economic information that is current, data-driven, and considers diverse perspectives.

## V. STRATEGIC PLAN

The RMAC reviews and updates the Strategic Plan every five years and present it to the Board for approval (see the [RMAC's webpage](#)<sup>3</sup> for the previous Strategic Plan [[RMAC 2020](#)]).

### **Overarching Priorities**

Guided by its vision and values and in pursuit of the mission enumerated above, the RMAC focuses on the following four overarching priorities:

1. Consider matters related to California's rangeland and forested rangeland resources that are under consideration by the Secretaries, the Board, or Federal agencies (as appropriate given the Board's role in representing State interests in Federal timberlands), offer advice and consultation, and recommend appropriate policy measures or administrative actions;
2. Share information and educational opportunities to Certified Range Managers and government agency rangeland and forestry staff to grow professional knowledge in this field;
3. Consult on the development and implementation of the Noxious Weeds Program through the California Department of Food and Agriculture (Food and Agriculture Code [FAC] §§ 7271<sup>4</sup> and 7273;<sup>5</sup> also see Appendix B: FAC § 7271 and Appendix C: FAC § 7273); and,
4. Monitor for issues in rangeland science and management and convene groups of relevant professionals to address these issues.

To achieve its overarching priorities, the RMAC establishes annual priorities in the form of goals and objectives. The goals are linked to the overarching priorities, and objectives are tiered off each of the goals in the form of action items to be accomplished in that calendar year. Progress made toward annual priorities is documented in the Annual Report and Workplan, and annual priorities for the upcoming year are also established in this document (see the [RMAC's webpage](#)<sup>3</sup> for current [[RMAC 2025](#)] and past reports).

### **Strategies**

Strategies to support the RMAC's overarching priorities, and to meet its annual goals and objectives, will generally take form in the following types of actions:

- A) Obtain and present cross sections of informed public opinion with respect to the rangeland resources of the State for guidance in formulating policy and programs.
- B) Consult as needed with technical experts.
- C) Encourage public participation at its meetings.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://bof.fire.ca.gov/board-committees/range-management-advisory-committee/>

<sup>4</sup> [https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes\\_displaySection.xhtml?sectionNum=7271.&lawCode=FAC](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?sectionNum=7271.&lawCode=FAC)

<sup>5</sup>

[https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes\\_displaySection.xhtml?sectionNum=7273.&nodeTreePath=5.4.1.2&lawCode=FAC](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?sectionNum=7273.&nodeTreePath=5.4.1.2&lawCode=FAC)

- D) Solicit priorities from the Board and advised Agencies annually, no later than October 15, for incorporation into each year's projects and priorities. Priorities will relate to programs under the purview of, or under consideration by, the Board and the Agencies and their relationship to rangelands and rangeland resources.
- E) RMAC shall establish its annual priorities at the first meeting of each calendar year to be approved by the Board at its next meeting.

To facilitate the successful deployment of these strategies and objectives, RMAC shall utilize the following membership guidance and procedures:

### **Membership**

Consistent with Public Resources Code §741, RMAC shall consist of eleven (11) voting members. The term of office shall be for four years with the terms staggered.

### **Voting Members**

- Three (3) members shall be nominated and appointed from the public. They should have an interest and background in the management and conservation of range resources or special knowledge in the protection of rangeland soils and watersheds.
- One (1) member from the California Resource Conservation Districts.
- The remaining seven (7) members shall be nominated from organizations representing rangeland owners. Nominated individuals do not have to be a member or affiliated with the nominating organization, but the nominating organization should have a clear connection to rangeland owners and have the background and expertise to reasonably assess the capability of a potential candidate to fulfill the duties of an RMAC committee member.

### **Ex-Officio Member**

A Board member shall be appointed by the Chairman of the Board to serve as an ex-officio member of RMAC. The Board member shall have no vote in Committee actions except in the case of a tie.

### **Officers**

RMAC shall annually elect from its voting membership a Chairperson and vice Chairperson.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

As an advisory committee under the oversight of the Board, members of RMAC may be perceived as quasi-public officials even though the committee lacks decision-making authority. As such, it is important that the members be aware of and avoid potential conflicts of interest, and even the possible perception of a conflict of interest. Generally, members must avoid participating in or influencing any decision in which they have a direct or indirect financial interest or other personal interest. The California conflict of interest rules that may apply to a particular member, or in a particular situation, can be very complex. If any questions or concerns arise regarding a potential conflict of interest, RMAC members should seek guidance from the Board's legal counsel.

## **Procedures**

### **Quorum**

A quorum shall consist of a minimum of six (6) voting members. Members that recuse themselves from a vote are counted towards the quorum.

### **Meetings**

RMAC shall meet a minimum of four times annually. Additional meetings may be held as needed. Meetings shall be called at the request of the Chairperson, or in their absence, by the vice Chairperson. The meetings of RMAC shall be duly noticed and open to the public in compliance with the [Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act](#).<sup>6</sup>

### **Subcommittees**

The Chairperson may appoint subcommittees to facilitate the duties of RMAC, as needed. Membership may be drawn from RMAC, technical consultants, and others as necessary. These subcommittees operate under the requirements of the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act.

### **Reports and Recommendations**

RMAC shall report its findings and recommendations to the Board and/or Secretaries as soon as possible after each meeting. Recommendations by RMAC for action by the Board or the Secretaries shall be on matters within the purview of the Board or the Secretaries, respectively, and shall clearly indicate what action, if any, is requested. The RMAC Chair or Board generally report on the RMAC's activities via verbal updates or formal presentations at Board meetings throughout the year, and at other related agency departmental meetings as warranted.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://oag.ca.gov/open-meetings>

**VI. APPENDIX – RELEVANT CALIFORNIA STATUTE SECTIONS****Appendix A: PRC § 741**

**DIVISION 1. ADMINISTRATION [500 - 830]** (*Division 1 repealed and added by Stats. 1965, Ch. 1144.*)

**CHAPTER 2.5. Department of Forestry and Fire Protection [700 - 783]** (*Heading of Chapter 2.5 amended by Stats. 1988, Ch. 160, Sec. 146.*)

**ARTICLE 2. State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection [730 - 745]** (*Heading of Article 2 amended by Stats. 1998, Ch. 972, Sec. 13.*)

**741.**

(a) The board shall appoint a Range Management Advisory Committee and shall consult with the advisory committee on rangeland resource issues under consideration by the board.

(b) The advisory committee shall consist of 11 members, who shall be selected as follows:

(1) Three members of the general public, who have an interest and background in the conservation of range resources or special knowledge in the protection of range and brushland soils and watersheds.

(2) One member nominated by the California Association of Resource Conservation Districts.

(3) Seven members nominated by organizations representing owners of range and brushlands.

(c) Members of the advisory committee shall serve without compensation.

(d) The Secretary of the Natural Resources Agency, the Secretary for Environmental Protection, and the Secretary of Food and Agriculture shall notify the advisory committee of, and are encouraged to consult with the advisory committee on, rangeland resource issues that are under consideration by the Natural Resources Agency, the California Environmental Protection Agency, and the Department of Food and Agriculture, respectively.

*(Amended by Stats. 2015, Ch. 683, Sec. 36. (SB 798) Effective January 1, 2016.)*

**Appendix B: FAC § 7271**

**DIVISION 4. PLANT QUARANTINE AND PEST CONTROL [5001 - 8808]** (*Division 4 enacted by Stats. 1967, Ch. 15.*)

**PART 4. WEEDS AND PEST SEEDS [7201 - 7603]** (*Part 4 enacted by Stats. 1967, Ch. 15.*)

**CHAPTER 1. Weeds [7201 - 7305]** (*Chapter 1 enacted by Stats. 1967, Ch. 15.*)

**ARTICLE 1.7. Noxious Weeds Management [7270 - 7276]** (*Article 1.7 added by Stats. 1999, Ch. 961, Sec. 1.*)

**7271.**

(a) The Legislature designates the department as the lead department in noxious weed management and the department is responsible for the implementation of this article in cooperation with the Secretary of the Natural Resources Agency.

(b) There is hereby created in the Department of Food and Agriculture Fund the Noxious Weed Management Account.

(c) Moneys appropriated for expenditure by the secretary for the purposes of this article may be spent without regard to fiscal year and shall be allocated as follows:

(1) Sixty percent of the moneys in the account shall be made available to eligible weed management areas or county agricultural commissioners for the control and abatement of noxious and invasive weeds according to an approved integrated weed management plan. These control moneys shall be made available through a grant program administered by the department. Proposals shall be evaluated based on the strategic importance for local and regional eradication of high priority noxious and invasive weeds.

(2) (A) Twenty percent shall be made available toward research on the biology, ecology, or management of noxious and invasive weeds; the mapping, risk assessment, and prioritization of weeds; the prevention of weed introduction and spread; and education and outreach activities. These moneys shall be made available to qualified applicants through a grant program administered by the department. Proposals shall be evaluated in consultation with the Range Management Advisory Committee, established pursuant to Section 741 of the Public Resources Code, with an emphasis placed on funding of needs-based, applied, and practical research.

(B) For purposes of this paragraph, a qualified applicant includes nonprofits, publicly funded educational institutions, state and local agencies, and California Native American tribes.

(3) Twenty percent shall be made available to the department, and shall only be used for the following purposes:

(A) Carrying out the provisions of this article.

(B) Developing noxious weed control strategies.

(C) Seeking new, effective biological control agents for the long-term control of noxious weeds.

(D) Conducting private and public workshops as needed to discuss and plan weed management strategies with all interested and affected local, state, and federal agencies, private landowners, educational institutions, interest groups, and county agricultural commissioners.

(E) Appointing a noxious weed coordinator and weed mapping specialist to assist in weed inventory, mapping, and control strategies.

*(Amended by Stats. 2018, Ch. 870, Sec. 2. (AB 2470) Effective January 1, 2019.)*

### **Appendix C: FAC § 7273**

**DIVISION 4. PLANT QUARANTINE AND PEST CONTROL [5001 - 8808]** *(Division 4 enacted by Stats. 1967, Ch. 15.)*

**PART 4. WEEDS AND PEST SEEDS [7201 - 7603]** *(Part 4 enacted by Stats. 1967, Ch. 15.)*

**CHAPTER 1. Weeds [7201 - 7305]** *(Chapter 1 enacted by Stats. 1967, Ch. 15.)*

**ARTICLE 1.7. Noxious Weeds Management [7270 - 7276]** *(Article 1.7 added by Stats. 1999, Ch. 961, Sec. 1.)*  
**7273.**

(a) The department shall designate and provide staff support to an oversight committee to monitor this article and shall consider input from weed management areas, county agricultural commissioners, and the Range Management Advisory Committee.

(b) The membership of the oversight committee shall include an equitable number of representatives from each of the following interests:

- (1) Livestock production.
- (2) Agricultural crop protection.
- (3) Forest products industry.
- (4) California Invasive Plant Council.
- (5) Research institutions.
- (6) Wildlife conservation groups.
- (7) Environmental groups.
- (8) Resource conservation districts.
- (9) The general public.
- (10) Local government.
- (11) The Department of Fish and Wildlife.

*(Amended by Stats. 2014, Ch. 271, Sec. 4. (AB 2402) Effective January 1, 2015.)*

## **VII. REFERENCES CITED**

- Forest Resource and Assessment Program (FRAP). 2017. Forests and Rangelands 2017 Assessment. California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, California Natural Resources Agency, Sacramento, CA. Available online: <https://34c031f8-c9fd-4018-8c5a-4159cdff6b0d-cdn-endpoint.azureedge.net/-/media/calfire-website/what-we-do/fire-resource-assessment-program---frap/assessment/forest-and-range-2017-assessment.pdf>. Verified 06 January 2025.
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