

BOARD OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION

THE NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Terrence O'Brien, CHAIR

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BOARD OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION MEETING MINUTES

SACRAMENTO, CA

July 23, 2025

BOARD OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION MEMBERS

Present:

- Terrence O'Brien, Chair
- J. Lopez
- Rich Wade
- Elicia Goldsworthy
- Ryan Hilburn

Absent:

- Elizabeth Forsburg-Pardi, Vice Chair
- Katie Delbar
- Dawn Blake

BOARD STAFF PRESENT:

- Dan Stapleton, Asst. Executive Officer, Foresters Registration
- Jeff Slaton, Senior Board Counsel
- Robert Roth, Board Counsel
- Dan Craig, Regulations Program Manager
- Jane Van Susteren, Regulations Coordinator
- Andrew Lawhorn, Forestry Assistant II
- Alexandra La Plante, Administrative
- Katie Harrell, Joint Institute for Wood Products Innovation, Board Staff
- Marcie Yates, Land Use Planning Manager
- Alex Vest, Wildfire Planning Specialist
- Mazonika Kemp, Records Administrator
- Anna Castro, Executive Assistant

DEPARTMENTAL STAFF PRESENT:

- Joe Tyler, Director/Chief, CAL FIRE
- Anale Burlew, Chief Deputy Director, CAL FIRE
- Eric Huff, Assistant Deputy Director, CAL FIRE
- Mathew Boone, Program Manager, Watershed Protection Program, CAL FIRE

Board Members Roll Call:

Member Lopez	Present
Member Wade	Present
Member Blake	Absent
Member Delbar	Absent
Member Forsburg-Pardi	Absent
Member Goldsworthy	Present
Member Hilburn	Present
Chairman O'Brien	Present

Quorum established

Announcement of Action(s) Taken in Executive Session:

Jeff Slaton, Senior Counsel for the Board, reported that during executive closed session the Board discussed the items on the agenda. In regard to the consideration of matters pursuant to Government Code §11126(a)(1) with respect to the Executive Officer position the Board with unanimous vote appointed Tony Anderson as the New Executive Officer of the Board of Forestry.

Report of the Director, Joe Tyler, Director/Chief, CAL FIRE:

Director Tyler announced to the Board Eric Huff as the new Deputy Director of Resource Management Programs effective July 28, 2025.

Resource Protection and Improvement Programs

Urban and Community Forestry

- An Aliso Canyon Green Schoolyards grant solicitation will open August 1, 2025, and close September 30, 2025. \$13.5 million will be offered to applicants in identified neighborhoods in the Aliso Canyon gas leak impact area.
- CAL FIRE awarded Inflation Reduction Act Urban and Community Forestry grants are being advised to proceed with implementing projects after being paused by presidential executive orders in January 2025.

Demonstration State Forests (DSF)

Jackson

- The Jackson Advisory Group (JAG) met on Tuesday, June 24, 2025. This meeting was held out in the field, starting at Camp One, and continuing with the Camp 8 South Late Seral Development project. Cal Poly Humboldt Professor Stephen Sillett was present to discuss his research paper Contributions of Exceptional Trees to Improve Management of Redwood Forests in California.
- In early June 2025, JDSF hosted the "Soils, Climate, and Prescribed Fire from Coast to Inland in Mendocino County" tour led jointly by the Professional Scientist Association of California and the California Forest Soils Council with 60 attendees present.
- A 12-foot bridge was installed on the "Caspar Crossing" trail with the Mendocino Coast Cyclists. Materials were provided by JDSF and carried in by volunteers. The Bridge crosses a minor perennial stream and is part of the work needed for the trail to become "official".

Prescribed Fire and Environmental Protection Programs

- CAL FIRE was able to achieve the target acres this fiscal year. With 156,254 acres treated with combined fuel reduction. We have 848 fuel reduction projects that were worked on this fiscal year. A great accomplishment from our Unit staff, cooperators and grant programs.

Prescribed Fire Program

- The Prescribed Fire Liability Claims fund is wrapping up from the last fiscal year. A summary report will be available soon and will be based on the completion reports requested from the applicants. The year end count was 16,881 acres and 150 projects that were covered in the reservation system. No claims were filed in fiscal year 24/25. The claims fund will roll over to fiscal year 25/26. New applications are being approved and an updated FAQ has been posted.
- At least two insurance companies are now providing private liability insurance in California that were not before the claims fund was created. They insure anything beyond the \$2 million covered by the claims fund for a project. Several applicants have commented that without the fund the projects would not be able to be conducted.

Environmental Protection

- CAL FIRE continues to support CNRA with the Secretarial Suspension requests by providing staff for project review. Over 50 projects are in the process. Projects can be added until the end of the calendar year.

Cultural Resources

- The Cultural Burn Awareness training at Blue Lake Rancheria on June 25 and 26, 2025, had a big turnout of over 75 participants for both days. Deputy Director of Tribal Affairs, Helen Lopez, attended and participated in a panel discussion.

Wildfire Resilience Programs

Reforestation Services

- Staff, in collaboration with other State agencies, Federal agencies, and numerous private entities, will begin canvassing California's forested landscapes for viable cone crops to ensure an adequate supply of conifer seeds in the State Seed Bank, located at the Lewis A. Moran Reforestation Center in Davis.

California Forest Improvement Program (CFIP)

- CFIP continues to offer cost share agreements with private landowners. The July funding selection batch included \$1.9 million in projects. CFIP continues to accept applications for the next funding selection batch occurring in November 2024 where we anticipate selecting up to \$2 million in projects.

Forest Legacy Program (FLP)

- The program continues to work on several existing conservation easement projects.

Climate and Energy Programs

Forest Health

- All 12 fiscal year 24/25 Forest Health grant awards announced in late May 2025 have fully executed grant agreements in place.
- Forest Health staff are actively engaged in CNRA Climate bond Care Meetings in anticipation of receiving Prop 4 Climate Bond funding in Fall 2025. They are also planning for future grant solicitations that will utilize both Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) and Proposition 4 Climate Bond Funding.

Fire and Resource Assessment Program (FRAP)

Assessment & Planning

- +Burn Severity Mapping, (FRAP) has launched the new California Vegetation Burn Severity Online Viewer, an interactive public mapping tool that shows how wildfires have impacted vegetation across the state. This resource supports California's commitment to transparency and wildfire resilience under Senate Bill 1101. The press release is scheduled to go out on July 14, 2025.

Fire Protection

Fire Protection Operations

- CAL FIRE Intel program has signed a 5-year contract with Technosylva, our fire forecasting, fire spread prediction spread model including the Common Operational Picture.
- CAL FIRE Intel program and Executives, including Deputy Director Scott Gregory, Deputy Director Frank Bigelow, Chief Technology Officer Ben Rogers, Staff Chief Phillip SeLegue, Research Program Supervisor Tiffany Meyers, and Research Data Manager Mark Rosenberg, were honored with the "Making a Difference" award at the annual Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) Conference in San Diego.

Aviation Management Unit (AMU)/Tactical Air Operations (TAO)

- CAL FIRE Aviation staff traveled with members of the Executive Team to United Rotorcraft on July 14 and 15, 2025, for a closing ceremony signifying the completion of the Fire Fighting Helicopter Procurement Contract for delivery of 16 CAL FIRE Hawks. The following week, a team from CAL FIRE Aviation traveled to United Rotorcraft to fly the last two remaining CAL FIRE Hawks home to McClellan.

Cooperative Fire Protection

Local Government Program

Contract County Program

- The Contract County Program through the "Fuels Reporting Working Group" continues to work with our partners to fine tune and improve various reporting elements. This includes a recent survey that was distributed to all contract counties to assess their current Computer Aided Design (CAD) access and compatibility. Integrating CAD data into CAL FIRE systems will help streamline incident reporting and reduce manual data entry delays.

State/Federal/Int. Programs

- State and Federal Program, along with CFMA Committee, met to finalize the working draft of the 2025 California Master Cooperative Wildland Fire Management and Stafford Act Response Agreement (CFMA). This agreement will be an update to the previous 2018-2023 CFMA. An approved update is expected prior to the end of 2025.

Hand Crew Program

- The California National Guard Title 10 activation effecting the JTFRS crews was rescinded on July 3, 2025. They are in the process of demobilizing from Los Angeles and staffing the crews.

Statewide Training Program

Academy Training Program (Training Centers)

- The Atwater Training Center (ATC) officially opened on Monday, July 7, 2025.
- Year to date, the Training Centers have trained the following:
 - 223 FFA students
 - 229 COA students
 - 128 Firefighters tested to IFSAC and Pro Board Firefighter 1 status

Office of the State Fire Marshal

Statistics

- The 2024 Redbook is in the final state of approval and will be posted to the CAL FIRE website.

Communications

- Camp Smokey is at the California State Fair. It opened July 11, 2025, and runs daily through July 27, 2025.

Tribal Affairs Program

Tribal Affairs

- Tribal Affairs Program and Butte Unit Chief Garrett Sjolund consulted with one tribe on the fire response communication protocols and suppression fire repair work.
- CAL FIRE continues to support the CNRA on the SB 310 Cultural Burning Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Agency and one Tribe. Currently, CNRA has entered an MOU with the Yurok Tribe on Cultural Burning.

Tribal Wildfire Resilience (TWR)

- Tribal Wildfire Resilience Grant Step 2 interviews have concluded. Award announcements are proposed for the end of July.

Consent Calendar Items:

07-23-01 Chair O'Brien removed item 7(d)(i) from the consent calendar. Member Lopez move to accept the remaining items on the Consent Calendar as presented. Member Goldsworthy seconds the motion.

Roll Call:

Goldsworthy:	Aye
Hilburn:	Aye
Lopez:	Aye
Wade:	Aye
Blake:	Absent
Delbar:	Absent
Forsburg-Pardi:	Absent
O'Brien:	Aye

Motion passed.

Report of the Chair, Terrence O'Brien:

Chair O'Brien informed Board that there will be a workshop tomorrow at 9am here at the Natural Resource Building on the Zone Zero Rulemaking. The goal is to make some final decisions on what the proposed regulations will be. Chair O'Brien updated the Board on the vegetation Treatment Program (PEIR). Grateful for the additional funding that was received from CAL FIRE.

Assistant Executive Officer Report, Dan Stapleton, Assistant Executive Officer

Dan Stapleton informed the Board that today is the last Board meeting that our Senior Legal Counsel, Jeff Slaton will be participating in. He thanked Jeff for his years of service and wishes him well.

Report of Professional Foresters Examining Committee, Dan Stapleton, Assistant Executive Officer

Dan Stapleton presented to the Board with the examination results for the Registered Professional Foresters and Certified Rangeland Managers that occurred in April of 2025. There were 53 exam takers for the RPF Exam and 1 person for the CRM exam. Dan asked the Board to certify the results for the passing RPF and CRM.

Professional Foresters Examining Committee. Approval of April 2025 RPF and CRM Licensing exam results:

07-23-02 Member Goldsworthy move to approve the April 2025 RPF and CRM Licensing exam results as presented. Member Lopez seconds the motion.

Roll Call:

Goldsworthy:	Aye
Hilburn:	Aye
Lopez:	Aye
Wade:	Aye
Blake:	Absent
Delbar:	Absent
Forsburg-Pardi:	Absent
O'Brien:	Aye

Motion passed.

Report of the Regulations Coordinator, Jane Van Susteren, Regulations Coordinator

The Board's Regulations Department present the Board with the final rule text and Final Statement of Reasons for the Rulemaking titled "Watercourse Crossings and Emergency Notice Watercourse Crossing Amendments, 2024".

Final Statement of Reasons and draft regulatory text for Watercourse Crossings and Emergency Notice Watercourse Crossing Amendments, 2024”.

07-23-03 Member Wade move to approve the Final Statement of Reasons for the rulemaking entitled “ Watercourse Crossings and Emergency Notice Watercourse Crossing Amendments, 2024”. Member Goldsworthy seconds the motion.

Roll Call:

Goldsworthy:	Aye
Hilburn:	Aye
Lopez:	Aye
Wade:	Aye
Blake:	Absent
Delbar:	Absent
Forsburg-Pardi:	Absent
O’Brien:	Aye

Motion passed.

07-23-04 Member Wade move to adopt the draft regulatory text for the rulemaking entitled “Watercourse Crossings and Emergency Notice Watercourse Crossing Amendments, 2024” and authorize staff to take all actions reasonably necessary to have the adopted regulations go into effect, including making appropriate non-substantive changes and any changes to facilitate OAL review and approval. Member Lopez seconds the motion.

Roll Call:

Goldsworthy:	Aye
Hilburn:	Aye
Lopez:	Aye
Wade:	Aye
Blake:	Absent
Delbar:	Absent
Forsburg-Pardi:	Absent
O’Brien:	Aye

Motion passed.

Final Statement of Reasons and draft regulatory text for 2025 Fire Risk Reduction Community List

07-23-05 Member Lopez move to approve the Final Statement of Reasons for the rulemaking entitled “2025 Fire Risk Reduction Community List”. Member Hilburn seconds the motion.

Roll Call:

Goldsworthy:	Aye
Hilburn:	Aye
Lopez:	Aye
Wade:	Aye
Blake:	Absent
Delbar:	Absent
Forsburg-Pardi:	Absent
O’Brien:	Aye

Motion passed.

07-23-06 Member Lopez move to adopt the draft regulatory text for the rulemaking entitled “2025 Fire Risk Reduction Community List” and authorize staff to take all actions reasonably necessary to have the adopted regulations go into effect including making appropriate non-substantive changes and any changes to facilitate OAL review and approval. Member Hilburn seconds the motion.

Roll Call:

Goldsworthy:	Aye
Hilburn:	Aye
Lopez:	Aye
Wade:	Aye
Blake:	Absent
Delbar:	Absent
Forsburg-Pardi:	Absent
O’Brien:	Aye

Motion passed.

Report of the Standing Committees:

Forest Practice/Management Committee, Rich Wade, Chair

The Forest Practice and Management Committee met yesterday. Forest Practice Committee discussed the following items on the agenda:

- The Committee continues to address the issue that was brought forward by CAL FIRE regarding overlapping harvest documents.
- The Committee discussed Roles and Responsibilities of Licensed Timber Operators that was presented to the committee by CAL FIRE.
- Considered Permanent Rulemaking for the Forest Resilience Exemption.
- Discussed Completion Notices for Emergency Notice Timber Operations under 14 CCR§1052.

Authorization to submit rulemaking regarding Forest Resilience Exemption for noticing of the 45-day Comment Period.

07-23-07 Member Wade move to authorize Board staff to submit the rulemaking entitled “Forest Resilience Exemption” for noticing of the 45-day Comment Period and take all appropriate actions consistent with the Administrative procedure Act for this purpose, including preparation and submission of the Notice of Proposed Action and Initial Statement of Reasons. Member Goldsworthy seconds the motion.

Roll Call:

Goldsworthy:	Aye
Hilburn:	Aye
Lopez:	Aye
Wade:	Aye
Blake:	Absent
Delbar:	Absent
Forsburg-Pardi:	Absent
O’Brien:	Aye

Motion passed.

Authorization to submit rulemaking regarding Geographically Overlapping Exemptions on Active Plans for noticing of the 45-day Comment Period.

07-23-08 Member Wade move to authorize Board staff to submit the rulemaking entitled “Geographically Overlapping Exemptions on Active Plans” for noticing of the 45-day Comment Period and take all appropriate actions consistent with the Administrative Procedure Act for this purpose, including preparation and submission of the Notice of Proposed Action and Initial Statement of Reasons. Member Lopez seconds the motion.

Roll Call:

Goldsworthy:	Aye
Hilburn:	Aye
Lopez:	Aye
Wade:	Aye
Blake:	Absent
Delbar:	Absent
Forsburg-Pardi:	Absent
O’Brien:	Aye

Motion passed.

Management Committee, Ryan Hilburn, member

The Management Committee had two items on the agenda that were discussed.

- The Permanent Rulemaking for the Oak Woodland Exemption which is part of the Forest Resilience Exemption. Committee will move forward to begin work on an Initial Statement of Reasons.
- Discussed Noticing Processes within the Forest Practice Rules will continue next month.

Resource Protection Committee, J Lopez, Chair

The Resource Protection Committee met and discussed the following two items from the agenda:

- Discussed the Land Use Planning Program Update from Deputy Chief Shane Vargas. They announced that they have fulfilled 4 permanent Battalion Chief openings that they had in the Land Use Planning and Fire Hazard Severity Zone Support Division.
- There are 1,280 Firewise Communities in good standing.
- Program announcement Fire Risk Reduction Community List application period opened on July 1, 2025.

Report of the Board's Advisory Committee:

Zone Zero Regulation Advisory Committee, Terry O'Brien, Chair

The Zone Zero Regulation Committee will meet tomorrow at 9 am to reach some final decisions on what the proposed regulations should look like to move forward.

Range Management Advisory Committee (RMAC), Dr. Marc Horney, Chair

The RMAC shared the following updates.

- RMAC continues to work on Senate Bill 675. Vice Chair, Dr. Stephanie Larson, is finalizing a survey that will be sent statewide to all those identified as being interested in assisting with the SB675 process.

California Forest Pest Council, Katie Harrell, Board staff

- Joelene Tamm, La Jolla Band of Luiseno Indians updated Board on critical concerns and strategic solutions.

PUBLIC HEARING

Public Hearing for Vegetation Treatment in the Watercourse & Lake Protection Zone, 2025.

The proposed action provides a permitting option for landowners to modify fuel loads within the WLPZ using heavy equipment while minimizing environmental impacts, providing a method to reduce fire intensity in the WLPZ. Dan Craig, Regulations Program Manager, asked the Board to authorize open public comments.

Public Comments:

- John Andersen, Humboldt, Mendicino Redwood Company, is in support of this rule package.
- Eric Huff, CAL FIRE, is in support of this rulemaking proposal.
- Kimberly Burg is not in support of this rulemaking.
- Larry Hansen shared his views on the WLPZ. He is not in support of this rulemaking.
- Joelyn, citizen stated she is in support of the Watercourse and Lake Protection Zones.
- Robin Laylor from Willits to share her views on Jackson State Demonstration Forest.
- Dave Leskovic, Vice President of Mandeville Canyon Association, Los Angeles, and a participant in the Defensible Space working group inspired by thought leaders from UCLA. He shared his views on the process of the Zone Zero Plea.
- Larry Hanson shared his views on the WLPZ and Vegetation Management.
- Joanne De Antonio, Chair for the Los Angeles Community Forest Advisory Committee, stated that she appreciates the revised tree policy in the latest Zone Zero Plea that was released yesterday. She shared that the plea needs more work.

- Larry Aguilar from Willits shared his thoughts on efficiency of burning pellets instead of wood.

CONCLUSION

Public Forum

Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,
ATTEST:



Dan Stapleton
Assistant Executive Officer
ATTEST:



Terrence O'Brien
Chairman