

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

June 18, 2025

BOARD OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION MEMBERS

Present:

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

Absent:

- Elizabeth Forsburg-Pardi, Vice Chair

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
- Kristina Wolf, Senior Environmental Scientist
- Katie Harrell, Joint Institute for Wood Products Innovation, Board Staff
- Alex Vest, Wildfire Planning Specialist
- Mazonika Kemp, Records Administrator
- Anna Castro, Executive Assistant

DEPARTMENTAL STAFF PRESENT:

- 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	Present
Member Delbar	Present
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 three items on the agenda and took no reportable action.

Consent Calendar Items:

06-18-01 Member Delbar moves to accept items on the Consent Calendar as presented. Member Lopez seconds the motion.

Roll Call:

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

Motion passed.**Report of the Chair, Terrence O'Brien:**

Chair O'Brien informed Board that Zone Zero held a workshop on Monday. There were many conversations held and input was received from Stakeholders. The Board is committed to getting regulations that are adopted that are going to be effective in addressing the wildfire issues that we have seen over the last 5 or 6 years in our community. Chair O'Brien shared that while there were concerns regarding funding challenges for Vegetation Treatment Program (PEIR), he is glad to report that CAL FIRE has been able provide additional funds to help pay for the consultants that are working on program.

Report of the Director, Eric Huff, Assistant Deputy Director, Forest Practice Program, CAL FIRE:

Forest Practice Program

- Currently at peak staffing in the North and South regions in preparing for an active fire season. The total wildland fire statistics as of Monday, 2025 combined year-to-date fire statistics for CAL FIRE and the Forest Service. We are up to 2700 wildland fire for a total of 89,000 acres. Compared to this time last year we were at 2200 wildland fires at this time last year. The five-year average was about 2600 fires for a total of under 18,000 acres.

Forest Practice Enforcement and Timber Operator Licensing (LTO)

- After 25 years of service to the department and being instrumental in running and improving the Forest Practice Enforcement and Timber Operator Licensing Programs, Cary Japp is retiring from the Department.
- LTO licenses are up to 1478 and we are at 98 active civil penalties cases.

Watershed Protection Program

- Mathew Boone has accepted the position of Forester III, Program Manager for the Watershed Protection Program.
- Program is working with the Pacific Southwest Research Station of the United States Forest Service on possible alternated plans for Caspar Creek (Jackson Demonstration State Forest) research data retrieval in case federal research programs are wound down.

Urban and Community Forestry

- Input is being conveyed from the Western State Urban Forestry Coordinators (WSUFC) to the Council of Western State Foresters (CWSF) and National Association of State Foresters (NASF) about potential implications of shifts or withdrawals of federal funding and partnerships.

Forest Entomology and Pathology Program

- The Mediterranean oak borer has spread into Mendocino, El Dorado, Amador and Yolo Counties from its previous range in Napa, Sonoma, Lake, and Sacramento Counties.
- The summer field trip of the insect and Disease Committees of the California Forest Pest Council will take place on June 17, 2025, in Calaveras County looking at pests of giant sequoia, red fir decline, and general pests of mixed conifer forests.

Forest Biometrics Program

- Forest Biometrics staff are working with Soquel DSSF staff developing a Continuous Forest Inventory (CFI) design.

Demonstration State Forests

Jackson (JDSF)

- The next Jackson Advisory Group (JAG) meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 24, 2025, at Camp One. The meeting will start with general JAG business and a presentation of recent research by Dr. Stephen Sillett, Cal Poly Humboldt. The day will conclude with a field tour of a proposed late seral development timber harvesting plan that will apply the findings of this recent research to accelerate the development of old growth trees and habitat.

- The Caspar Creek Paired Watershed Experiment annual meeting was held May 22-24, 2025. It brought together a broad group of agencies, organizations, and researchers to share findings on climatic, stream, and forest conditions research within the third experimental harvest in this watershed.
- On May 16, 2025, California Conservation Corps began installing large wood within the Brandon Gulch watercourse, directly upstream of work completed by Trout Unlimited in 2024.

Mountain Home (MHDSF)

- Van's Logging commenced operations on a 1038 exemption on May 27, 2025, to remove numerous hazard trees from within and adjacent to the Shake Camp Campground. They will move to the Kemp property, acquired in 2020, to continue removal of dead and dying trees from beetle activity and send saw logs to Sierra Forest Products.

Soquel (SDSF)

- Crews from the Santa Cruz Unit have prepared 9-acres for controlled burns within the Santa Rosalia Vegetation Treatment Project (VTP) footprint. An additional one-acre burn unit was prepared for ignition in June, weather permitting. No Spring burns have occurred on the State Forest to date. The burn unit was selected to test the efficacy of this strategy to increase the pace and scale of prescribed burning in the redwood system prior to fire season and while live fuel moistures are higher.

Prescribed Fire Program

- The Prescribed Fire Liability Claims Fund Pilot Project currently has 136 projects with 15,447 acres in the reservation system. No claims have been filed to date.

Reforestation Services

- The yearly Cone Crop Survey Memo was just released, which provides direction and resources to assist with cone surveys for the 2025 season. The individual resource documents, as well as the revised 2025 Assessment of Seed Needs, can be found at the program website.
- In collaboration with American Forests and US Forest Service, CAL FIRE is again supporting and instructing at a series of Cone Camp cone surveyor trainings being held in various locations around the state throughout the month of June.
- 4182.53 lbs. of seeds from cones collected in 2024 have been processed and stored of which 2469.14 lbs. is the publicly available portion. A very small amount is still to be processed.
- Nursery staff is growing 208,130 seedlings as net production in the nursery. This number could be slightly adjusted depending on the second sowing germination/culling and transplanting survival.

Wood Products & Bioenergy

- Began reviewing the 102 applications that were submitted for Business and Workforce Development grants. The total request for funding was \$87 million. \$5 million is available for award.

Forest Health

- FY 24-25 Forest Health awards were announced by the Governor's Office News Release on May 30, 2025. A total of 12 Forest Health Projects were awarded, totaling \$71.9 million.

Climate Change

- The California Air Resources Board released its California Climate Investments Annual Report on May 7, 2025. The report highlights the \$544 million that has been awarded through the Forest Health program cumulatively (plus \$19 million awarded through the Business & Workforce Development program), achieving an estimated 18 million metric tons of greenhouse gas reductions. The report includes a video about a Forest Health grant with the Hoopa Valley Tribe NS project profile for a Forest Health grant with American Forests.

Fire and Resource Assessment Program (FRAP)

Research & Monitoring

- The FIA data collection season began on May 1, 2025, and will conclude October 31, 2025.
- Good initial progress to the field season with 78 plots loaded to date (11% of total).
- The Forest Health Research Grant program has awarded 15 grants

Forest and Rangeland Assessment

- The FRAP Assessment is progressing, with all but two chapters undergoing or past the external review phase. Anticipate completion and release of the report Aug/Sept (2025).
- FRAP has developed an internal draft web viewer for statewide fire severity maps as required under SB1101. We have produced maps for large fires that occurred from 2015-2023 showing the severity of wildfire effects on vegetation. This is currently on track to launch a live user interface with the initial dataset in late July 2025, pending approval from CAL FIRE's Executive Team. Future work will focus on fine-tuning methods, particularly for fires burning in diverse, non-conifer vegetation types where standardized methods are lacking.

GIS-Data Analytics

- CalMapper team continues to work with the new vendor to develop the new version of CalMapper, which will include a new Field Data collection component, among other changes. Goal is for the release of the new version on July 1, 2025, with testing and training planned in the months leading up to release. The new release will also allow for the inclusion of the new Tribal Wildfire Resilience Grants to be entered in CalMapper, CalMapper team also working on how to fulfill new SB4137 reporting requirements.

Fire Protection

Law Enforcement/Civil Cost Recovery

- Through May 2025, Law Enforcement officers have made 53 Arson arrests.
- In fiscal year 24/25, approximately \$24.3 million in fire suppression costs have been collected by the Civil Cost Recovery program.

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

- Conducting the CAL FIRE night Aerial Firefighting Exercise (NAFE) June 4, 2025, through June 11, 2025, at McClellan for exclusive use contracted night aerial suppression resources. A delegation from Chile is in attendance for observation.

Cooperative Fire Protection

Hand Crew Program

- Hand Crew Strength: as of June 18, 2025, CAL FIRE can staff 143 of the 236 Hand Crews available for statewide response. The number of Hand Crews available

significantly impacts wildland fire suppression, conservation work, prescribed fire activities, and fuels reduction work.

Statewide Training Program (Statewide Training)

- Statewide Training is in the final planning phase to begin hosting year-round JAC courses at the Atwater Training Center.

Academy Training Program (Training Center)

- As of June 6, 2025, 270 company officers have graduated.

Office of the State Fire Marshal

Wildfire Preparedness

Defensible Space

- Round two of new Defensible Space Inspector training occurs later this month.
- Inspection Totals
 - Fiscal Year 2024-2025
 - 225,852
 - Year to Date 2024-2025
 - 83,588

Home Hardening

- Preparing the Wildfire Prepared Home demonstration at Camp Smokey California State Fair.

Utility Wildfire Mitigation (UWM)

- Currently reviewing PG&E, SDG&E, SCE and BVES 2026-2028 WMP submission. PG&E will be submitting a revision.

Community Wildfire Mitigation Assistance (CWMA)

Land Use Planning

- National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) Firewise USA
 - Currently 1244 communities in California

Wildfire Prevention Grants

- Preparing for the next open solicitation later this month.

Communications

- CAL FIRE's statewide Fourth of July statewide campaign will begin on June 16, 2025, and continue through July 4, 2025. The campaign is focused on fireworks safety and aims to reduce the risk of starting wildfires.

Tribal Affairs Program

- The CAL FIRE Tribal Affairs Program and Sonoma State University are jointly consulting with three tribes for the repatriation of collection items held by CAL FIRE and housed at Sonoma State University as required by the CAL Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA).
- CAL FIRE Tribal Affairs Program will attend the 2025 Cultural Burning Seminar at the Blue Lake Rancheria and be part of a panel to discuss SB 310 Cultural Burning implications and CAL FIRE collaboration and partnership on June 25 and 26, 2025.

Tribal Wildfire Resilience

- The grant solicitation closed on March 28, with 44 applications submitted totaling approximately \$52.6 million. This solicitation has a two-step process, and 12 applications have moved on to Step 2, which included video interviews and additional documents requests. Award announcements are proposed for the end of July 2025.

Assistant Executive Officer Report, Dan Stapleton, Assistant Executive Officer

Dan Stapleton informed the Board members that the Board is required by the Administrative Procedures Act to assess the public impacts of our proposed Zone Zero Regulations in a SRIA (Standardize Regulatory Impact Assessment). CNRA has taken the lead on contracting with a vendor to produce the SRIA. The understanding was that CNRA and the Board would then enter into an interagency agreement pursuant to which CNRA would give the SRIA to the Board. In exchange for reimbursement of what CNRA paid for their contractor. There are a number of outstanding issues that we are still trying to resolve with CNRA regarding the content of the interagency agreement so it is not ready for Board consideration today. However, there would be some benefit in trying to complete these negotiations and get the contract executed prior to the end of the fiscal year on June 30th. Since we do not have an Executive Officer with delegated authority to handle contract approvals for the Board and since the fiscal year will end before the board meets in July, we are asking that the Board consider approving a delegation of authority to our Chairperson O'Brien to continue contract negotiations on behalf of the Board. If appropriate terms can be reached to sign the contract on the Board's behalf and if the Board is amenable to this request, it would require approval with a formal motion. Chair has been involved in the contract negotiations with CNRA.

Consideration of BOF-CNRA Interagency Agreement/Potential Delegation of Authority to Chair O'Brien:

06-18-02 Member Wade move to delegate authority to Chair O'Brien to negotiate and sign a contract with the California Natural Resources Agency for the preparation and delivery to the Board of a satisfactory Standardized Regulatory Impact Assessment, as required by the Administrative Procedures Act, for the Board's adoption of regulations for an ember-resistant zone pursuant to Public Resources Code 4291. Member Goldsworthy seconds the motion.

Roll Call:

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

Motion passed.

Report of the Regulations Coordinator, Jane Van Susteren, Regulations Coordinator
The Board's Regulations Department has three items before you:

- Consideration of Supplemental Statement of Reasons for issuance of 15-day notice for the Rulemaking titled "Watercourse Crossings and Emergency Notice Watercourse Crossing Requirements, 2025". There are no changes to the rule text as reviewed by the Board. This has a supplemental statement of reasons incorporating an indigenes reference.
- Consideration of amended rule text and Supplemental Statement of Reasons for issuance of 15-day notice for the Rulemaking titled "Fire Risk Reduction Community List Amendments, 2025"
- Board Consideration of re-adoption of emergency rulemaking entitled Forest Resilience Exemption and Oak Woodland Exemption Amendments 2025

Consideration of Supplemental Statement of Reasons for Rulemaking titled "Watercourse Crossings and Emergency Notice Watercourse Crossing Requirements, 2025."

06-18-03 Member Wade move to authorized Board staff to submit the rulemaking entitled "Watercourse Crossings and Emergency Notice Watercourse Crossing Requirements, 2025" for noticing of a 15-day Comment Period and take all appropriate actions consistent with the Administrative Procedure Act for this purpose, including preparation and submission of the Supplemental Statement of Reasons, appropriate notification and modified rule text. Member Delbar seconds the motion.

Roll Call:

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

Motion passed.

Consideration of Amendment Rule Text and Supplemental Statement of Reasons for Rulemaking titled “Fire Risk Reduction Community List Amendments, 2025.”

06-18-04 Member Lopez move to authorize Board staff to submit the rulemaking entitled “Fire Risk Reduction Community List Amendments, 2025” for noticing of a 15-day Comment Period and take all appropriate actions consistent with the Administrative Procedure Act for this purpose, including preparation and submission of the Supplemental statement of Reasons, appropriate notification and modified rule text. Member Wade seconds the motion.

Roll Call:

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

Motion passed.

Re-adoption of Finding of Emergency and Rule Text for Emergency Rulemaking for “Forest Resilience Exemption and Oak Woodland Exemption Amendments, 2025.”

06-18-05 Member Wade move to re-adopt the finding of emergency and rule text for the rulemaking titled “Forest Resilience Exemption and Oak Woodland Exemption Amendments, 2025” and authorize staff to take all actions reasonably necessary to have the re-adopted regulations go into effect, including making appropriate non-substantive changes and any changes to facilitate OAL review and approval. Member Blake seconds the motion.

Roll Call:

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

Motion passed.

Report of the Standing Committees:

Forest Practice Committee, Rich Wade, Chair

The Forest Practice Committee discussed the following four agenda items:

- Continued discussions of the Permanent Rulemaking for the Forest Resilience Exemption.
- Discussed Renewal of Emergency Rulemaking for the Forest Resilience Exemption and Oak Woodland Exemption.
- Discussed consideration of Rulemaking for geographically Overlapping Exemptions on Active Plans.
- Discussed Completion Notices for Emergency Notice timber Operations under 14 CCR§1052.

Management Committee, Ryan Hilburn, Member

The Management Committee had four agenda items that were discussed yesterday.

- Discussed Permanent Rulemaking for the Oak Woodland Exemption. Committee is close to completing and should have an affirmative rule at the next meeting.
- Discussed the Emergency Rulemaking.
- Discussed Noticing Processes within the Forest Practice Rules.
- Discussed the Rulemaking for Timeline Amendments for Less than Three Acre Conversion Exemptions.

Consideration of 45-day notice for “Timeline Amendments for Less than 3-acre Conversion Exemptions, 2025”

06-18-06 Member Hilburn move to authorize Board staff to submit the rulemaking entitled “Timeline Amendments for Less Than 3-acre Conversion Exemptions, 2025” for noticing of the 45-day Comment Period and take all appropriate actions consistent with the Administrative Procedure Act for this purpose, including preparations and submission of the Notice of Proposed Action, Initial Statement of Reasons, and Rule Text. Member Delbar seconds the motion.

Roll Call:

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

Motion passed.

Resource Protection Committee, J. Lopez, Chair

The Resource Protection Committee discussed the following:

- The committee received an update from Land Use Planning Program from CAL FIRE. There are 9 more communities since you received your report, which brings the total to 1,253.
- The committee received subdivision review Program updates from Santa Cruz County, San Mateo County, Redwood City and Woodside City.
- Discussed Safety Element Review for City of Goleta, City of Vista and County of Siskiyou.

Report of the Board's Advisory Committee:

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

The Committee would like to thank the staff for the work that they have done under demanding timelines. The regulations that the committee hoped to move forward with this month are not yet finalized but continue to work on achieving these goals.

Effectiveness Monitoring Committee (EMC), Ryan Hilburn, Co-Chair

The Effectiveness Monitoring Committee had a productive meeting and anticipated bringing a couple items before the Board in July for approval.

- The Committee is recommending combining the three seats that are open into one position and that it can be filled by anyone from any of the three agencies.
- The Committee reviewed six initial concept proposals that were submitted to the EMC. Four of those were found to meet the scope of the requirements for the EMC Grant guidelines and we have requested full projects from those four. Those will be reviewed at the next meeting on August 25th in Redding.

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

The RMAC shared the following updates:

- The RMAC is presently seeking one new nominee to the committee. This person needs to be nominated by an organization that represents range landowners.
- The RMAC is in the process of implementing the task assigned to it under Senate Bill 675. A regional action team has been formed to lead education and community engagement in developing guidance for the use of grazing for wildland fuels management in different regions of the state.
- RMAC published a Prescribed Herbivory White Paper on the use of grazing for fuels management and undergoing an update to that paper which should be completed later on this year.
- The next RMAC meeting will be held July 28th in Sacramento. You can register for meeting and find more information on the RMAC website.

Professional Foresters Examining Committee, Dan Stapleton, Assistant Executive Officer

Dan Stapleton explained the process of withdrawals to the Board. He requests the Board to approve the withdrawals and the voluntary relinquishments that are listed on form presented to the Board.

Consideration of 45-day notice for "Timeline Amendments for Less than 3-acre Conversion Exemptions, 2025"

06-18-07 Member Wade move to approve the request for Registered Professional Forester Withdraw as itemized as presented to the Board by the Executive Officer of Forestry Licensing. Member Delbar seconds the motion.

Roll Call:

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

Motion passed.

CONCLUSION

Public Forum

Public Comments:

- Richard Gienger stated he appreciated the beginning of the Director's Report regarding Forest Practice Review Teams and working on maximum sustained yield high quality timber products. Richard also shared his disappointment with AB1492 not having any discussions on that program.

Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,
ATTEST:



Dan Stapleton
Assistant Executive Officer



Terrence O'Brien
Chairman