

BOARD OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION

THE NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Terrence O'Brien, CHAIR

Wade Crowfoot, *Secretary*

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BOARD OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION MEETING MINUTES

SACRAMENTO, CA

April 15, 2026

BOARD OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION MEMBERS

Present:

- Terrence O'Brien, Chair
- Elizabeth Pardi, Vice Chair
- Elicia Goldsworthy
- Ryan Hilburn
- Joe King

Absent:

- Dawn Blake
- J. Lopez
- Katie Delbar

BOARD STAFF PRESENT:

- Tony Andersen, Executive Officer
- Dan Stapleton, Asst. Executive Officer, Foresters Registration
- Kate Cook, Senior Board Counsel
- Jane Van Susteren, Regulations Coordinator
- Andrew Lawhorn, Forestry Assistant II
- Alex Vest, Wildfire Planning Specialist
- Katie Harrell, Joint Institute for Wood Products Innovation
- Alexandra La Plante, Administrative Manager
- Mazonika Kemp, Records Administrator
- Anna Castro, Executive Assistant

DEPARTMENTAL STAFF PRESENT:

- Joe Tyler, Director, CAL FIRE
- Eric Huff, Deputy Director Resource Management, CAL FIRE
- Justin Britton, Demonstration State Forest Manager, CAL FIRE

Board Members Roll Call:

Member Lopez	Absent
Member King	Present
Member Blake	Absent
Member Delbar	Absent
Member Pardi	Present
Member Goldsworthy	Present
Member Hilburn	Present
Member Williams	Present
Chairman O'Brien	Present

Quorum established

Consent Calendar Items:

04-15-01 Member Pardi moves to accept items on the Consent Calendar as presented. Member Hilburn seconds the motion.

Roll Call:

King:	Aye
Pardi:	Aye
Goldsworthy:	Aye
Hilburn:	Aye
Williams:	Aye
Lopez:	Absent
Blake:	Absent
Delbar:	Absent
O'Brien:	Aye

Motion passed.

MONTHLY BOARD REPORTS:

Report of the Chairman, Terrence O'Brien

The Chairman reported a Zone Zero workshop is scheduled for April 23, 2026, in Calabasas, and the revised plead will be released beforehand for public review. Following the workshop, additional adjustments may be made based on the input received. The Committee intends to present a proposal at the June Board Meeting. The Chairman again thanked staff for their hard work and expressed confidence that the upcoming regulations will help make the community safer.

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

Forest Practice Program

Casper Creek

- The USFS will be closing the JDSF-aligned Fort Bragg facility as per their proposed reorganization plan (Forest Service Reorganization/US Forest Services). The closure of the Fort Bragg facility will severely curtail the ability to maintain the 64-year-old Caspar Creek Experimental Watersheds, which is a collaborative study between CAL FIRE and the USFS Pacific Southwest Research Station.
- The forest service has come out with their reorganization plan and as part of that the State of California specifically CAL FIRE wrote letters opposing the USFS reorganization plan because of the great relationship with our forest service partners.
- The Region 5, Regional Forester will be eliminated in the next 12 to 24 months when the new plan is implemented. In place of that it is proposed that there will be a state level director for the United States Forest Service.

Resource Protection and Improvement Program

Urban and Community Forestry

- The program announced the availability of \$13.5 million in new Green Schoolyards funding to support educational facilities impacted by the 2015 Aliso Canyon gas leak. Applications opened April 1, 2026, and will be accepted through May 29, 2026.

Demonstration State Forests (DSF)

Jackson (JDSF)

- Justin Britton has been appointed to the Demonstration State Forest Manager position effective April 6, 2026.

Boggs Mountain and Las Posadas

- The California Air Resources Board (CARB) installed air-monitoring equipment at Las Posadas to collect data regarding fuel treatments in proximity to vineyards.

Jackson

- The first Jackson Advisory Group (JAG) meeting of the year was held on Monday, March 30, 2026, at the Fort Bragg Lions Club. JAG Chairperson Amy Wynn announced the June 2026 meeting would be her last. JAG member John Anderson also announced his pending resignation from the JAG, no specific date at this time. An Updated JAG Member Solicitation was issued on March 30, 2026.
- Clifton Environmental CAL FIRE, and JDSF staff continue to preparing responses to public comments and editing the Final Draft 2026 Forest Management Plan (FMP). The JDSF website has all related FMP material and information: www.fire.ca.gov/jdsfplan

Prescribed Fire and Environmental Protection Programs

Prescribed Fire Program

- CAL FIRE Units are currently maximizing active spring burn windows and monitoring early-season fuel drying.
- As of February 28, CAL FIRE has successfully treated 15,532 acres through prescribed fire this fiscal year.

- The CAL FIRE Prescribed Fire Program, together with the Climate and Wildfire Institute (CWI), will host a full-day in-person convening in April 2026 for the California vintner community and prescribed fire practitioners. This event will foster open dialogue, practical information sharing, and firsthand learning about how prescribed fire can be used safely and strategically to protect landscapes while minimizing impacts on vineyards.

Cultural Resources

- The Blue Lake Rancheria Tribe is hosting a Cultural Fire Symposium, previously known as Cultural Burn Awareness on June 16-17, 2026.

Wildfire Resilience Programs

- Another round of Wildfire Resilience Block Grants is planned for 2026. Up to \$10,000,000 in funding under Proposition 4 will be solicited out for reforestation focused grants.

California Forest Improvement Program (CFIP)

- Two more CFIP solicitations are scheduled for 2026 in April and October. The CFIP program is down to its remaining \$2.5 million in project funding as based on current demand will likely liquidate the amount in the April funding batch.

Forest Legacy Program (FLP)

- In partnership with Siskiyou Land Trust, with funding from the USDA Forest Service (USFS) and CAL FIRE's Forest Legacy Program acquired 12,213 acres working forest conservation easement in Siskiyou County.

Climate and Energy Programs

Wood Products & Bioenergy

- The 2026 Business and Workforce Development grant solicitation is currently open, with \$10 million available from Greenhouse Gas Reduction Funding. Applications are due May 20, 2026.

Forest Health

- Forest Health's concept proposal solicitations closed on March 30, 2026, and the program received 240 applications between the Proposition 4 and California Climate Investments (CCI) funding opportunities.

Regional Wildfire and Landscape Resilience

- The public comment period on CAL FIRE's Regional Wildfire and Landscape Resilience Grant Program closed on April 13, 2026. The California Legislature appropriated \$30 million from the 2024 Climate Bond (Proposition 4) to CAL FIRE to fund regional projects to "improve local fire prevention capacity, improve forest health and resilience, and reduce the risk of wildfire spreading into populated areas from wildlands."

Tribal Wildfire Resilience

- Program is updating Tribal Wildfire Resilience Grant Guidelines and expects to open a solicitation in late spring-summer 2026 with \$10 million of Proposition 4 funds.

Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force

- The Task Force hosted its largest meeting ever on March 19, 2026, in Tuolumne County. There were over 430 attendees at the event which included in-depth discussion on efforts across the Sierra Nevada focused on achieving, sustaining, and financing wildfire and landscape resilience.

- The next Task Force meeting will be in Sacramento on June 5, 2026, and will feature the 2026 Action Plan.

Wildfire Hazard & Risk

- FRAP has hired Dr. Eric Rowell to serve as Senior Environmental Scientist leading the development of Potential Operational Delineations (PODs) for SRA, as well as supporting other wildfire hazard and risk projects and functions.
- FRAP has executed an agreement with Oregon State University (OSU) to support implementation of PODs for four pilot units (BTU, TGU, BEU and TUU).

Forest and Rangeland Assessment

- FRAP staff continue to develop a burn severity mapping viewer as required by SB 1101.

Fire Protection

Fire Protection Program

Law Enforcement/Civil Cost Recovery

- CAL FIRE peace officers have made 28 arrests and issued 97 citations through March 2026.
 - 13 of those arrests are for arson.
- Approximately \$22 million in fire suppression cost recovery has been received this fiscal year.

Operations / Intel

- The 2026 Incident Management Team (IMT) Conference was held on March 23-26, 2026, at the Riverside Convention Center.

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

- The Aviation Maintenance and Pilot contract has been awarded to Amentum. The current extension runs through June 30, 2026.
- CAL FIRE has secured 21 Exclusive Use helicopters for the 2026 Fire Season. These assets will be spread across California and 8 will be Night Vision Goggle (NVG) capable of assisting in fire suppression throughout the night.

State/Federal/International Programs

- CAL FIRE has been in Victoria British Columbia and Costa Rica. Also, in Rome Italy the Director had the opportunity to speak on the great work of the department.

National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Firewise USA

- There are currently 1608 Firewise Communities in good standing.

Communications

- 2026 Wildfire Preparedness Week runs May 3-9, 2026, featuring statewide events under the theme "Prepare Today, Protect Tomorrow: Your Role in Wildfire Safety". There is an event May 2, 2026, in El Dorado County with a community workday. Events continue in Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, and Sonoma counties.

Tribal Affairs Program

- CAL FIRE has come into compliance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) and the California Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (CalNAGPRA). CAL FIRE invited 185 federally and non-federally recognized Tribes to consult. To date, CAL FIRE is consulting with 28 Tribes.

Report of the Executive Officer, Tony Andersen:

The Executive Officer Andersen thanked Director Tyler and CAL FIRE for their work on the Springs Fire near Moreno Valley and updated the Board on the following:

Announcements and staffing:

- Rhys Williams has filled the Board's last vacant seat.
- Delia Rojas is the new Board Attorney III.
- Board staff has one vacancy opening for Regulations Program Manager and is accepting applications through April 30, 2026.

Legislative and Upcoming Schedule:

Legislative Tracking

- Board members continue to monitor incoming communications during this busy Legislative session.

Upcoming Schedule:

- Hold May 11 for a tentative Zone Zero public workshop, pending the April 23, Calabasas meeting outcomes.
- Committee Meetings for Forest Practice, Resource Protection and Management are schedule for Tuesday, May 12th.
- May 13th a tour to the L.A. Moran Reforestation Center in Davis is planned to focus on reforestation.
- May 14th the full Board Session is confirmed to be held in Sacramento at the Natural Resources Building.

Statutory Requirements and Decisions:

- **AB 1492 Review:** Completed the annual statutory assessment of taxable wood products and timber regulations for the Forest Restoration Fund.
- **Outcome:** Determined no updates are necessary at this time following staff review and discussion.

Report of The Standing Committees:

Forest Practice Committee, Elicia Goldsworthy, Chair

The Forest Practice Committee met yesterday and discussed three items including Amendments to the Silviculture Rules, Clarification of Operational Responsibilities for License Timber Operators and the review of minor rule updates.

- Discussed Draft Rule Text on Silviculture under section 933 as it relates to commercial thinning. It was discussed to changing the post-harvest stocking requirement on pine dominated sands that are site 1, pine dominated meaning 50 percent of the basal area. It will change from 100 square feet to 75 square feet per acre. Committee anticipates review of an initial statement of reasons at the next committee meeting with hopes of moving that forward.
- Discussed the silviculture package that included small pine and discussions around Variable Retention and Uneven-age Management. It was decided to break those up and those will be heard separately.
- Deliberations continue on 9134 special prescriptions.
- Discussed concerns raised by CAL FIRE regarding implementation of variable retention.
- Continued discussions concerning the responsibilities of License Timber Operators will continue in the May meeting. The primary focus will be on clarifying operational

responsibilities during active timber operations as well as road maintenance following completion.

- Discussed the Draft Rule Text for Points of Light regarding minor errors. Also discussed listed species.

Management Committee, Liz Pardi, Chair

The Management Committee met yesterday and discussed the following two items:

- Discussed the Rule Text for Noticing Processes and Rules Specifics to the Southern Subdistrict and Santa Cruz County. The committee will move forward with a rule package related to the Noticing Procedures for the Southern Subdistrict and will continue discussions with Santa Cruz County.
- Discussed the Draft Rule Text on Silviculture Uneven-aged Management and the committee determined that the Forest Practice Committee move forward with the Silviculture Rule Package. The Management Committee will continue discussing Uneven-age Management in the year ahead.
- There is one item for consideration for the Board today. There is a consideration and potential adoption of the LaTour Demonstration State Forest Management Plan update.

Consideration and potential adoption of the La Tour Demonstration State Forest Management Plan update:

04-15-02 Member Pardi moves to approve the La Tour Demonstration State Forest Management Plan update as presented. Member Hilburn seconds the motion.

Roll Call:

King:	Aye
Pardi:	Aye
Goldsworthy:	Aye
Hilburn:	Aye
Williams:	Aye
Lopez:	Absent
Blake:	Absent
Delbar:	Absent

O'Brien: Aye

Motion passed.

Resource Protection Committee (RPC), Ryan Hilburn, Member

The RPC met yesterday and were briefed by the Community Wildfire Mitigation Assistance Program staff with the following:

- Currently there are 1608 Firewise Communities in good standing.
- Also review fire safety surveys/subdivision reviews for the city of Newport Beach. There were 19 of those and that concluded a 5-year process of subdivision review.

CWMAF staff is going to begin the cycle again this year to start those reviews again.

- Also reviewed two safety elements one from Orange County and from the City of Brea.

Report of Board's Advisory Committees:

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

The Effectiveness Monitoring Committee discussed the following items:

- The EMC has a request for proposals that are due May 18th at 5:00 pm.
- The next meeting is scheduled for June 8th where grant research program initial concepts will be discussed to see if any will be invited to advance to the full project proposal stage. It is anticipated that the approved 2025 Annual Report and Workplan will be presented to the Board for review and consideration during the June meeting.
- The EMC is planning to conduct one field tour this year to showcase projects investigating the effectiveness of the Forest Practice Rules and Related Regulations.

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

- The Range Management Advisory Committee currently has 3 of the 11 voting seats that remain vacant. The committee is requesting nominations for 2 seats representing Range Land Organizations. As well as 1 representative from the California Resource Conservation Districts.
- RMAC will continue to conduct its annual education program by leveraging all the external resources that are available.
- The RMAC local regional grazing guidance is being finalized for publication online and should be posted on the RMAC website.

Joint Institute for Wood Products Innovation (JIWPI), Katie Harrell, Board Staff

Ms. Harrell informed the Board of the following updates:

- JIWPI is working with Camptonville to help facilitate efforts to keep their biomatter project going, as it is currently at risk due to funding timelines.
- JIWPI is working with Carb and their State Bio-Char connection group at monthly meetings and have facilitated institute and Caltrans presentations to the group to elevate our work in research findings. Also, worked with others in the mass timber space to get everyone together to agree to create a California Mass Timber Coalition.
- Next meeting will be May 19, 2026.
- RMAC is assisting UC Berkeley with a Mass Timber Symposium on May 20th at the Richmond Field Station.
- Executive Officer Andersen and I attended the International Mass Timber Symposium in Portland, Oregon. It was great to have Board and Institute presence.

PRESENTATIONS:

- 2025 US Forest Service (USFS) California Aerial Survey Summary Report, Jeffrey Moore, USFS
- Overview of Good Neighbor Agreement Activities in California, Jonathan Fitch, CAL FIRE

CONCLUSION

Public Forum

Public Comments:

- Craig Thomas, Fire Restoration Group, (non-profit) shared his views on reforestation and a research paper regarding this issue that he shared with the Board.
- Richard Gienger shared his view on AB 1492.

Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,
ATTEST:



Tony Andersen
Executive Officer
ATTEST:



Terrence O'Brien
Chairman