

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

SANTA CRUZ, CA

July 23, 2026

BOARD OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION MEMBERS

Present:

- Terrence O'Brien, Chair
- Katie Delbar
- J. Lopez (Remote)
- Elicia Goldsworthy
- Ryan Hilburn
- Joe King
- Rhys Williams

Absent:

- Liz Pardi, Vice Chair
- Dawn Blake

BOARD STAFF PRESENT:

- Tony Andersen, Executive Officer
- Dan Stapleton, Asst. Executive Officer, Foresters Registration
- Kate Cook, Senior Board Counsel
- Delia Rojas, Board Counsel
- Jane Van Susteren, Regulations Coordinator
- Andrew Lawhorn, Forestry Assistant II
- Marcie Yates, Land Use Planning Manager
- Alex Vest, Wildfire Planning Specialist
- Katie Harrell, Joint Institute for Wood Products Innovation
- Alexandra La Plante, Administrative Manager
- Jennifer Lau-Malicedem, Contracts Analyst
- Denielle Casarubbia, Licensing Analyst
- Anna Castro, Executive Assistant

DEPARTMENTAL STAFF PRESENT:

- Joe Tyler, Director, CAL FIRE
- Eric Huff, Deputy Director Resource Management, CAL FIRE

Board Members Roll Call:

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

Quorum established

Chair O'Brien reconvened closed session

Consent Calendar Items:

07-23-01 Member Delbar move to accept items on the Consent Calendar as presented. Member Goldsworthy seconds the motion.

Roll Call:

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

O'Brien:	Aye
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Motion passed.

MONTHLY BOARD REPORTS:

Report of the Chairman, Terrence O'Brien

Chairman O'Brien reflected on the previous day's field tour and emphasized the urgency of addressing the statewide forest crisis. He urged the Board to be more creative, less risk adverse, and more strategic with limited resources. Chair O'Brien thanked Executive Officer Andersen, Board staff, Cal Fire staff, and all presenters for organizing the off-site meeting and field tour, noting that the time spent in the field is highly valuable. He stated that the tour highlighted both the growing wildfire risks facing California and the need for government including the Board, to expedite forest management work. He also noted that the governmental processes can unintentionally impede needed projects such as prescribe burns and fuel breaks. The Chairman raised concerns about project inefficiencies in the coastal zone and acknowledged air district concerns about smoke,

while stressing that prescribe burns ultimately reduce smoke and carbon emission from large wildfires. He concluded by stating that the Board must be more assertive in proposing solutions and that the board needs additional resources.

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

Director Joe Tyler summarized his report to the Board which can be located on the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection website.

Comments:

- Member King commented on Director's report
- Member Williams commented on Director's report
- Member Goldsworthy commented on Director's report
- Richard Gienger commented on Director's report

Executive Officer Report, Tony Andersen:

Executive Officer thanked CAL FIRE staff and leadership for the previous day's tour. The CalVTP was discussed extensively, including next steps and timelines. Earlier this year, the Board received a general update on the CALVTP and staff had planned to return with a draft for the Board to review prior to releasing it for public comment. Staff is coordinating and completing edits with 10-15 public agencies, departments, and stakeholders, which has been a significant effort. The goal remains to bring a draft to the Board for review and feedback, followed by releasing it for public comment later this fall.

As part of the ongoing organizational rebuilding efforts, the Executive Officer announced that Tyler Hullquist as the new Regulations Program Manager. An update was also given on the Board Forward Initiative, which will evaluate Board processes and identify improvement opportunities. Lastly, it was noted that the Legislature is on summer recess and will reconvene on August 3, 2026.

Report of the Standing Committees:

Joint Forest Practice Committee and Management Committee, Elicia Goldsworthy and Liz Pardi, Chairs

The Forest Practice Committee and Management Committee met yesterday and had discussions on the following presentations:

- The Future of Southern Subdistrict Silviculture: Managing for Hardwoods and Postfire Recovery, Nadia Harney, Hamey Woods
- Fuels Project Implementation, David Van Lennep, Chief Operations Forester, Auten Resource Consulting
- Discussed Timber Harvest Plans Working Group

Comments:

- Richard Gienger commented on the Joint Forest Practice Committee and Management Committee

Resource Protection Committee (RPC), Ryan Hilburn, Co-Chair

The Resource Protection Committee met on Tuesday and discussed the following:

- The RPC Committee welcomed Member Williams to be part of the Committee
- Chief Deputy Vargas reported for the Community Wildfire Mitigation Assistance Program and gave their update. There were 1695 Firewise Communities that program continues to grow.
- Also reviewed 5 safety elements from the cities of Monte Sereno, Lake Forest, Corona, Placerville and the county of Madera
- Marcie Yates and Alexandra Vest reported on the 2026 Fire Risk Reduction Community List. This list was approved last month and gave an update on how that program continues to grow. It started with 32 communities in 2022, 50 in 2024, and 119 this year.

Report of Board's Advisory Committees:

Professional Foresters Examining Committee (PFEC), Dan Stapleton, Assistant Executive Officer

- Announcement of the April 2026 Registered Professional Forester Exam Results
- The California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (Board) has reviewed and certified the April 3, 2026, RPF and CRM Exam results. The following individuals are recommended for licensing as Registered Professional Foresters (RPF) by the PFEC.

Applicant 8363 – Ethan Luckens
Applicant 8411 – Andrew Fullerton
Applicant 8416 – Frank Heide
Applicant 8420 – Jessica Drummond
Applicant 8423 – Kevin Soland
Applicant 8431 – Pierre Balda Shuiling
Applicant 8444 – Andrew Stunz
Applicant 8445 – Bartly Carlson
Applicant 8455 – Hudson Northrup
Applicant 8457 – Keoni Sitar
Applicant 8458 – Josh Theofanides
Applicant 8461 – Austin Law
Applicant 8471 – Bryce McCurry

Applicant 8474 – Kathryn Low
Applicant 8476 - Kyle Mantzouranis
Applicant 8477 – Mark Inman
Applicant 8478 – Peter Rowland
Applicant 8482 – Isabell Berger
Applicant 8484 – Alan Talhelm
Applicant 8490 – Genevieve Tarino
Applicant 8491 – Justin Lewis
Applicant 8492 – Kane Russell
Applicant 8494 – Robert Muma
Applicant 8503 – Ryan Davy
Applicant 8504 – Alexander Cunha
Applicant 8508 – Dustin Morgan

**Professional Foresters Examining Committee Announcement of the April 2026
Registered Professional Forester Exam Results:**

**07-23-02 Chair O'Brien move to certify the April 2026 Registered
Professional Forester licensing examination results as presented.
Member Goldsworthy seconds the motion.**

Roll Call:

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

O'Brien: Aye

Motion passed.

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

The Zone Zero Committee conducted twelve workshops, including four in Southern California and visited recent wildfire sites in Altadena and Pacific Palisades. They also toured neighborhoods in Los Angeles, Berkeley, and Santa Rosa. In response to the Governor's directives, the committee's goal was to develop regulations that make communities safer from catastrophic wildfires. While the proposed regulations accomplish this, the committee acknowledges there is no perfect solution.

A major point of debate was what vegetation should be permitted in Zone Zero along with concerns about enforceability, clarity, and public acceptance. The regulations require residents in state and local responsibility areas to change how they landscape their properties, which has prompted resistance especially regarding possible tree removal or pruning and fears about losing urban forests. The committee does not believe these fears reflect the reality of the regulations but listened carefully to concerns about the shade, heat, water use, energy use, and aesthetics. Opinions vary widely, with some viewing the regulations as too strict and others saying they do not go far enough. Additional concerns include affordability related to tree work and fence replacements.

After weighing these issues and consulting with the Office of the State Fire Marshal and local fire departments, the committee expects implementation to emphasize public education. The committee will recommend that the Board approve the regulations at the August Board meeting.

- Staff Presentation Update on Zone Zero Rulemaking and Next Steps, Yana Valachovic, University of CA and Jane Van Susteren, Board staff

Comments:

- Member Delbar commented on Zone Zero Regulations
- Dave Lefty commented on the Zone Zero Regulations
- Stephanie Landergen commented on the Zone Zero Regulations
- Matt Dobbsen commented on the Zone Zero Regulations
- Diana Nicole commented on the Zone Zero Regulations
- Nurit Katz commented on Zone Zero Regulations
- Erin Faust commented on Zone Zero Regulations
- Penny Sylvester commented on Zone Zero Regulations
- Member Lopez commented on Zone Zero Regulations

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

The EMC met yesterday and discussed the following items:

- The EMC will meet on August 20th 2026, and will be reviewing full research proposals.
- Seven concept proposals were invited to provide full proposals only 4 of those chose to continue and committee will review those on August 20th.

Comments:

- Richard Gienger commented on the proposals.

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

The Range Management Advisory Committee met and discussed the following:

- The committee continues to seek nominations for 3 open seats.
- The RMAC chair was recently notified of an amendment proposed to AB2075, by the California Farm Bureau and the California Cattleman's Association. AB2075 imposed restrictions on the operation of internal combustion engines on fire prone lands but as part of that it established more flexible regulations based on project size complexity for Timber Operators. The proposed amendment would extend similar flexibility to Rangeland Operators for similar reasons. RMAC will have an initial discussion about this at its next meeting.
- Given that staff support will be reduced to a bare minimum for the unforeseeable future, the RMAC is going to be challenged to maintain its work on core tasks and assignments. The committee will be attempting to increase effort from its members by organizing task orientated subcommittees, working under compliance with the Bagley-Keene requirements.
- The next meeting for RMAC has been scheduled for August 13, 2026, from 12:30- 3:30 pm. The agenda will be posted on the RMAC website next week.

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

Kate Harrell reported the following to the Board:

- The Mass Timber Coalition that is underway continues to progress and the next meeting is schedule for the 1st week of August.
- Also continue to get great visibility with the coalition.

- The Joint Institute for Wood Products Innovation 2026 -2027 grant opportunity is underway now. Those proposals are due by August 3, 2026.
- Katie Harrell virtually attended the Moving Bio-Mass Forward CNRA working meeting on Monday with Board member Goldsworthy.

CONCLUSION

Public Forum

Public Comments:

- Richard Gienger shared his views with the Board.

Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,
ATTEST:



Tony Andersen
Executive Officer



Terrence O'Brien
Chairman