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# CALIFORNIA WILDFIRE MITIGATION PROGRAM BOARD MEETING

## Meeting Minutes – Tuesday, November 28, 2023

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### **Board Members Present**

Daniel Berlant, Board Chair, State Fire Marshal, CAL FIRE  
Robert Troy, Board Member, Assistant Director, Recovery, Cal OES  
Frank Bigelow, Board Member, Assistant Deputy Director, Community Wildfire Preparedness & Mitigation and Fire Engineering & Investigations, CAL FIRE

### **CWMP Staff Present**

J. Lopez, Executive Director  
Jordon Boyer, SSM I  
Matthew Delgado, AGPA  
Sarah Glenn, AGPA

### **Cal OES Staff Present**

Ron Miller, Branch Chief, Hazard Mitigation  
Ryan Massello, Division Chief, Hazard Mitigation  
Lisa Long, SSM I, Hazard Mitigation Special Projects  
Angelica Quezada, AGPA, Hazard Mitigation Special Projects  
Brian Doss, AGPA, Hazard Mitigation Special Projects  
David Neill, Assistant Chief Counsel  
Lisa Rice, Consultant (Virtual)  
Liston Conrad, Consultant (Virtual)

### **CAL FIRE Staff Present**

John Morgan, Staff Chief (TAU) of Wildfire Risk Reduction  
Heather McCulley, Deputy Chief of Wildfire Preparedness  
Dennis O'Neil, Assistant Chief  
Kara Garrett, AGPA  
Justine Grafton, AGPA  
Will Brewer, GIS Analyst  
Melissa Curtis, Battalion Chief  
Randy Northup, Battalion Chief

**I. CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME – 10:03 AM**

- a. The meeting was called to order at 10:03 AM and welcome remarks provided by Board Chair D. Berlant.

**II. ROLL CALL/QUORUM ESTABLISHED**

- a. Roll call and quorum established with all Board Members present.
  - D. Berlant – Present
  - A. Browning – Absent
  - R. Troy – Present
  - F. Bigelow – Present

**III. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES**

- a. Review and approval of Meeting Minutes from October 17, 2023. No public comments received.

**Motion:** R. Troy moved to approve Meeting Minutes from October 17, 2023.

Motion not seconded.

**Action:** Motion postponed to next scheduled meeting, January 16, 2024.

**IV. APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA**

- a. Review and approval of Meeting Agenda. No public comments received.

**Motion:** F. Bigelow moved to approve Agenda for November 28, 2023.

R. Troy seconded the motion.

**Action:** All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

**V. OLD BUSINESS**

- a. Home Hardening Pilot Program Monthly Status Report (Information item)
  - Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) Special Projects Unit (SPU) Update – Branch Chief Ron Miller
    - i. Community Updates – Ron Miller
      - 1. Closing out Advance Assistance Grants to Lake, San Diego, and Shasta.
      - 2. Subrecipients are administering projects which include financial record keeping, invoicing, and quarterly reporting.

- Budget Update – Ron Miller
  - i. SB 85
    - 1. Need to liquidate \$4.8M by 06/30/2024 and \$16M by 06/30/2025.
  - ii. AB 179
    - 1. \$13 Million must be encumbered, expenditure, or liquidated by 06/30/2027.
  - iii. SB 101
    - 1. \$12 Million must be encumbered, expenditure, or liquidated by 06/30/2028.
  - iv. New Major Disaster Declaration for Hurricane Hillary Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)
    - 1. DR 4750
      - a. Funding Amount TBD
      - b. Notices of Interest (NOI) are now being accepted.
      - c. Detailed Notice of Funding Opportunity will be released in the next month.
      - d. Sign up for Automated email notification from Cal OES Hazard Mitigation
        - i. <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/CALOES/signup/31457>
  
- CAL FIRE Update – Dennis O'Neil
  - i. Continued review of assessments and scope of work documents (SOW).
  - ii. Conducted a defensible space scope of work field review for the Whitmore pilot community.
  - iii. Received input from our CWMP Assessment App Survey.
  - iv. Determining needs and timeframes for our next CWMP Defensible Space and Home Ignition Zone Assessor training.
  
- b. California Wildfire Mitigation Program (CWMP) Program Update
  - Shasta County/Shasta County Fire Safe Council – Jordon Boyer
    - i. Applications:
      - 1. 40 Homeowner Applications received to date.
    - ii. Assessments:
      - 1. 13 Assessments Complete
      - 2. Four of the assessments involve “no issue” properties.
    - iii. Scopes of Work:
      - 1. Scopes of work have been completed on three of the four ‘no issues’ properties.
    - iv. Program Next Steps:
      - 1. Community is hosting a defensible space contractor walk thru at a no issue property on November 30<sup>th</sup>. Cal OES and CAL FIRE staff to attend.

- San Diego County/San Diego County Fire Department – Sarah Glenn
  - i. Applications:
    - 1. 43 Homeowner Applications received to date.
  - ii. Assessments:
    - 1. 13 Assessments Complete
  - iii. Scopes of Work:
    - 1. 8 Scopes of work have been completed.
    - 2. 4 additional in progress
  - iv. Environmental Historical Preservation (EHP) Review:
    - 1. 4 properties went to EHP Phase II vendor for further review.
    - 2. 1 property is on the no-issue list and not further EHP is required.
  
- Siskiyou County/Shasta Valley Resource Conservation District – Sarah Glenn
  - i. Applications:
    - 1. 17 Homeowner Applications received to date.
  - ii. Assessments:
    - 1. 2 Assessments Complete
    - 2. 3 Additional Assessments in QA, pending minor revisions for completion.
  - iii. Scopes of Work:
    - 1. Scope of Work Procedures in Development
  - iv. Request for Qualifications (RFQ):
    - 1. RFQ/Contractor Procurement in Development
  
- Lake County/North Coast Opportunities (NCO) – Matt Delgado
  - i. Applications:
    - 1. 18 Homeowner Applications received to date.
  - ii. Assessments:
    - 1. 16 Assessments Complete
  - iii. Scopes of Work:
    - 1. 1 Scope of Work Complete
    - 2. 1 Scope of Work in Progress
  - iv. Homeowner Walkthrough:
    - 1. NCO staff have completed the initial walkthrough with their first homeowner to review proposed mitigation measures.
  
- Tuolumne County – Matt Delgado
  - i. EHP Phase I:
    - 1. The winning bid has been selected.
  - ii. Next Steps
    - 1. Contract will be ratified at Board of Directors meeting.
    - 2. Contractor can begin work on EHP Phase I Deliverables
    - 3. Training for program staff will be scheduled near end of EHP Phase I work.

- El Dorado County – Matt Delgado
  - i. EHP Phase I:
    1. Request for Proposal (RFP) has been completed and submitted to OES review.
  - ii. Next Steps
    1. The county is developing duty statements for staff that will support the program.
    2. The Placerville Fire Safe Council was approved as a Firewise community and will support outreach and community education.

## **CWMP Board Meeting Presentations**

- AB 38 Home Hardening County Prioritization – Ron Miller
  - i. CA Govt Code § 8654.7 (2022)
    1. Designated wildfire hazard areas eligible for financial assistance under the wildfire mitigation program shall include all of the following.
      - a. Local responsibility areas located within a very high fire hazard severity zone.
      - b. State responsibility areas located within any fire hazard severity zone, as indicated on maps adopted by the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
      - c. Any other lands designated by the joint powers authority as consistent with the purposes of this article.
    2. The joint powers authority shall develop criteria and a scoring methodology to prioritize financial assistance provided under the wildfire mitigation program to areas and communities based upon
      - a. Area and community vulnerability to wildfire.
      - b. The impact of future climate risk factors on area and community wildfire vulnerability assessments.
      - c. Factors that lead some populations to experience a greater risk to wildfire, adverse health outcomes, or an inhibited ability to respond to a wildfire, including socioeconomic characteristics of the areas or communities that would be protected by financial assistance. “Relevant socioeconomic characteristics” may include data on poverty levels, residents with disabilities, language barriers, residents over 65 or under 5 years of age, and households without a car.
  - ii. Scoring Criteria
    1. A total of two scoring “classes” were used.
      - a. Environment:
        - i. 4 criteria are environmental (Fire Hazard Severity Zone)

- b. Socioeconomic
          - i. 10 criteria are socioeconomic.
  - 2. Final score weighted environmental and socioeconomic criteria equally (50/50)
  - iii. Scoring Criteria: Environmental
    - 1. Total parcels in Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ)
    - 2. Percent of parcels in FHSZ out of county total
    - 3. Wildfire climate risk in FHSZ
    - 4. Fire probability in FHSZ
  - iv. Scoring Criteria: Socioeconomical
    - 1. Poverty
    - 2. Disability
    - 3. Limited English
    - 4. Over 65 and Under 5
    - 5. No Vehicle
  - v. Final Score
  - vi. Current Applicant Demographics
    - 1. Total Applications 120 (San Diego, Shasta, Lake, Siskiyou)
      - a. 13 households 80% Area Medium Income (AMI) or less
      - b. 45 household 80%-120% AMI
      - c. 16 households with person 5 years or younger
      - d. 63 households with person 65 years or older
      - e. 34 households with person with disabilities
      - f. 13 households with person with limited English
      - g. 1 household with no car
- Home Assessment Statistics – Dennis O'Neil
  - i. Physical Mechanisms Responsible for Exterior Structural Ignition
    - 1. Embers, Direct Flame Contact, Radiative and Convective Heating
      - a. Assessment Vulnerabilities from Embers
      - b. Assessment Vulnerabilities from Fire
  - ii. Home Hardening Existing Non-Conforming Structures (Retrofitting)
    - 1. Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Fire Hazard Mitigation Methodology (HMM)
    - 2. The goal is to use the latest laboratory research findings and knowledge from post-wildfire field observations to effectively harden structures.
  - iii. Ember Vulnerability Assessment
    - 1. HMM and the assessment application identifies and evaluates 40 + separate vulnerabilities to exterior structural components from embers.
      - a. Roofing, vents, exterior covering, exterior windows and skylights, doors, attachments
  - iv. Vulnerabilities from Fire Assessments
    - 1. Wildland vegetation, ornamental vegetation, misc. combustibles, adjacent residences, vehicles, accessory

buildings, misc. structures

2. Fire Vulnerability is Determined by Evaluating the Combustible Hazards Separation Distance from the Primary Residence
- v. Fire Vulnerability Mitigation Assessment
1. Remove the fuel—this approach removes the exposure all together and is essential when there is limited space for fuel relocation/displacement.
  2. Relocate the source—this approach allows the fuel to remain on the parcel but moves it away from the primary residence to reduce fire exposures.
  3. Reduce the fuels—this approach reduces the number of combustibles and therefore the expected exposures.
  4. Harden structures for fire exposure –targeted hardening to side/s of a primary structure where an unmitigated hazard exists.
- vi. Data: This analysis utilized data from 39 finalized Home Hardening and Defensible Space assessments conducted in the following communities:
1. Dulzura – San Diego County
  2. Kelseyville Riviera – Lake County
  3. Whitmore – Shasta County
  4. Average assessment time is approximately 60 -120 minutes in the field.
- vii. Structure Type and Construction Year
1. Type of Structure
    - a. 67% Single Family Single Story
    - b. 10% Single Family Multiple Story
    - c. 23% Manufactured Home
  2. Year Structure Built
    - a. 5% 1936-1952
    - b. 5% 2008-2011
    - c. 13% 1953-1969
    - d. 33% 1970-1986
    - e. 44% 1978-2007
      - i. 28% of residences are 45 years or older.
- viii. Unmitigated Hazards – Hardening for Fire
1. 77% of properties have at least one hazard that will require additional hardening to side/s.
  2. These assessments only identified the four hazards shown that couldn't be mitigated.
    - a. 16% Neighboring Residence
    - b. 66% Defensible Space (100 feet)
    - c. 16% Auxiliary Building
    - d. 20% Auxiliary Structure

ix. Roof

1. 98% of assessed residences have an existing Class A rated roof.
2. 15% of assessed residences need roof replacement due to the coverings condition longer meeting its fire rating.
3. 41% of assessed residences need roof repair due to deficiencies with the assembly.

x. Gutters

1. 58% of assessed residences will need a gutter cover retrofit. Criteria requires retrofit if the gutter cover is combustible or installation if there is no gutter cover present.

xi. Vents

1. 95% of the assessed homes had attic ventilation. 100% of those homes will need attic ventilation retrofitting.
2. 82% of the assessed homes had foundation ventilation. 100% of those homes will need foundation vents retrofitting.
3. Vents by Category
  - a. Ridge, Off Ridge, Gable, Eave Soffit, Foundation, Dryer, Makeup Air Intake

xii. Exterior Covering

1. 82% of the assessed homes had a combustible exterior covering within 2 feet from the ground that will need to be retrofitted with a CWMP Minimum Quality Standard (MQS).
2. 66% of the assessed homes will have at least one side that will require a full exterior covering retrofit due to an unmitigated exposure.

xiii. Windows

1. 95% of assessed homes do not have WUI compliant windows.
2. 69% of assessed structures will have at least one side of the structure that will require window retrofit due to an unmitigated exposure.

xiv. Doors

1. 90% of assessed homes have wooden frames, threshold, or exterior doors which may require retrofit.

xv. Garage Doors

1. 51% of the assessed parcels have a garage.
2. 15% are wooden garage doors.
3. 80% require retrofits. (gasketing/flashing/ penetrations/etc.)

xvi. Attachments

1. 95% of assessed homes have at least one attachment.
2. Attachment Retrofit Type
  - a. Deck, Fence, Steps, Handrails, Other; Carports, porches, lattice, etc., Retaining Wall, Pergola

xvii. Accessory Buildings

1. 51% of assessed residences have an accessory building.
2. HMM recommends remove or relocate accessory buildings to the recommended separation distance. If unable, then harden



the structure.

3. Accessory Building Retrofits:
    - a. Attachment, Window Screen, Window (Single), Vents, Wall Penetrations, Siding, Roof Treatment, Gutter, Roof-to-wall, skylight
- No Issue vs. Issue Properties – Matt Delgado
- i. Origin of No Issue vs. Issue
    1. Cal OES and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) engaged in a multi-year collaboration to identify opportunities to innovate and streamline the Environmental and Historic Preservation (EHP) Clearance Process for this program.
    2. Conducted desk analysis of all parcels within project area which have a private residential structure.
      - a. Filtered to remove all homes constructed 45+ years prior.
      - b. Applied layers for flood, water features, wetlands, critical habitats, nationally registered historic sites, and removed all parcels with intersects.
    3. The proposed list is submitted to the EHP Phase 1 subject matter experts (SME) to validate the proposed no issue parcel list.
  - ii. Definitions
    1. No Issue indicates homes that may proceed to site work without additional EHP review.
    2. Issue refers specifically to parcels that need further EHP review.
  - iii. No Issue Parcels
    1. Not located in a wetland area
    2. Not in a special flood area
    3. Not in a critical habitat
    4. Constructed less than 45 years ago.
    5. Not otherwise culturally or historically significant
    6. Parcels on the No Issue List may have issues in the future.
      - a. SOW Exceeds programmatic allowances.
      - b. Work takes place during nesting bird season.
      - c. Unforeseen circumstances
  - iv. Issue Parcels
    1. Parcels that may have historical and cultural significance to Indigenous Peoples
    2. Parcels that are otherwise culturally or historically significant
    3. Parcels with a home that was built more than 45 years ago.
    4. Parcels that contain critical habitats for threatened and endangered species
    5. Parcels that are located near waterways.
    6. Parcels located in special flood areas.
  - v. Anticipated Common Issues
    1. Homes older than 45 years
    2. Nesting Bird Surveys
      - a. February to August

3. It is still early in the process, and we will be able to more accurately spot trends as our data set expands.
- vi. Managing Common Issues
  1. Subject Matter Expert Property Review Form
    - a. Develop process for batching and streamline review.
- vii. Site Specific EHP Issues
  1. Four No Issue
  2. Three Property Age
  3. Six Wetland Ara
  4. One Special Flood Ara
  5. One Critical Habitat Area
  6. Zero Culturally or Historically significant
  7. Zero SOW Flags

## VI. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Staff Recommendations and Next Steps for the Home Hardening Demonstration Community Pilot Program (*Informational Only*)- J. Lopez
  - Defensible Space Material Management
    - i. Generally large amount of firewood and wood chips are left in the project area. It can be a Hazard if left in place unmanaged, Cost of disposal, etc.
      1. Options for property owners:
        - a. Leave on site with management instructions for property owner.
        - b. Donate or give away.
        - c. Establish Wood utilization.
          - i. Existing programs: Urban Wood Network or Street Tree Survival
        - d. In areas classified as Timberlands, Forest Practice Rules apply.
          - i. If commercial species are sold, Structure Protection Exemption 1038–c, Removal of fire hazard trees from 0 to 150 feet of an Approved and Legally Permitted Structure.
          - ii. FEMA encourages recipients/subrecipients to generate program income to help defray program costs. Program income is gross income received by the recipient/subrecipient directly generated by an award-supported activity or earned only because of the award during the award period of performance. (HMA P&P Guide)
        - e. The intent is to discourage waste, encourage wood utilization, and carbon sequestration.
- Project sustainability – Community Benefits
  - i. CWMP Alignment with:
    1. California State Hazard Mitigation Plan

2. Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan, Goal 2. Strengthen Protection of Communities
  3. Department of Insurance Safer from Wildfires Program
  4. Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety (IBHS) Wildfire Prepared Home Certification
- ii. Promote establishing Organized and Educated Communities
    1. California Fire Safe Council
    2. NFPA Firewise
    3. Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (BOF&FP) Fire Risk Reduction Community List
- b. San Diego County Community Update – Akilah Cunningham, Program Manager
- San Diego County Home Hardening Initiative – *Background*
    - i. Approached by Cal OES/CAL FIRE in Summer 2021 to participate as a demonstration community.
      1. Locally led by San Diego County Fire Community Risk Reduction Bureau
      2. Selected the project areas of Dulzura, Campo, and Potrero based upon fire severity zones, wildland interface areas, burn recurrence interval rates, and socio-economic indicators.
    - ii. Began developing HMGP sub-application, including identifying local implementation strategy, staffing capabilities and competency requirements, and recruiting and onboarding the local project team.
      1. Established goal to harden 10-25 homes the first year (intentional soft launch recognizing this is a pilot program and there would be many lessons learned before scaling up)
      2. Local strategy to begin in Dulzura and expand to the other project areas over the three-year period of performance.
    - iii. As the program resources became available (CWMP portal, Mobile Assessment App), began homeowner outreach in Dulzura December of 2021.
      1. Home Hardening team attended Dulzura Community Development Center meetings to deliver information regarding the program Bi-Monthly.
      2. Attended all community events (Holiday parties, Safety Fairs, monthly community board meetings).
      3. Began accepting homeowner applications and completing home assessments – there is enough homeowner interest to meet and exceed the year 1 goal.
  - Leveraged Partnerships and Resources
    - i. Dulzura Community Development Center Board
      1. Invites the home hardening team to attend monthly meetings and deliver program information and updates.
      2. Allows use of the community center for monthly application sessions for interested homeowners, especially beneficial for the socially vulnerable who may not have access to internet, lack

computer skills for online application, do not have transportation to visit the county office to apply, etc.

ii. Fire Safe Councils (FSC)

1. The Dulzura FSC provided the program with the first demonstration home for assessment training.
2. The Dulzura FSC Invited the home hardening team program to attend community events like Community Public Safety Fairs to further promote the program.

iii. CAL FIRE Defensible Space Program- DSI inspectors

iv. San Diego County Board of Supervisors, including:

1. Supervisors who signed and approved the program and resolutions that were needed.
2. Department of Planning Development Services- For all permitting needs
3. Department of Purchasing and Contracting which handles all contractor solicitations and contracts.
4. County and State GIS for mapping needs.
5. Public Safety Group

v. Local Schools

1. Allowed the program to send outreach materials to homes of the student body.

vi. Other outreach efforts included:

1. Direct mailers from the board of supervisors, digital signage, etc.
2. Have learned that it takes multiple interactions to engage some homeowners; anticipate that as the community sees homes hardened, demand will increase even more.

- Key Accomplishments

- i. Have engaged enough homeowners to realize the goal of hardening 10 -25 homes during the first year of the HMGP subaward (issued August 2023).
- ii. Have developed strong partnerships and built rapport with interested homeowners.
- iii. Contributed to the refinement of program tools (notably, the mobile assessment app and minimum quality standards), and have helped identify areas in need of additional guidance.
- iv. Have supported CWMP with training new communities as they have come on board assisted in assessment training of new programs that came on board.
- v. Strived to remain flexible and adaptable since this is a Pilot Program changes are always made along the way, and the Home Hardening team continues to be flexible and adapt.

- Lessons Learned

- i. When San Diego came on board it was in the earliest stages –
  1. Assessment app was still in development,

2. EHP process had not been ironed out with FEMA, etc.
  3. Homeowner outreach should have been delayed until more of the program's framework was developed.
- ii. Assessment App/adding 0-5 foot into scope.
    1. While refinements are positive there are always impacts to San Diego
      - a. Every time a change was made in the assessment app and MQS we had to redo assessments and change the scopes of work and request for quotes that go out to local contractors.
        - i. When writing the Minimum Quality of Standards, it is important to become familiar with the local county's codes and ordinances. Often the county's codes exceed state laws.
      - b. Statement of work for contractors that have already been out for solicitation must be amended.
      - c. Impacts the Master and tri-Party Agreements causing amendments to be made and the agreements having to go out for signature again.
    - iii. Due to low response from Contractors licensed to work on Manufactured/Mobile homes during the initial solicitation for qualified contractors, County Fire had to reopen the solicitation again.
    - iv. Tax Implication for homeowners.
- Current Status and Next Steps
- i. Have developed a list of prequalified contractors who will perform site work (Defensible space, General B licensed Contractor's and Manufactured/Mobile Home (C-47 license).
    1. Prepared to send the first home out for bid ~ 4 weeks.
    2. Solicitation will open quarterly to add additional General B and Manufactured/Mobile Home licensed Contractors onto the established list. The next solicitation will open in January.
  - ii. Secured subject matter experts for EHP reviews
    1. Finalizing first few issue property packages for FEMA in the next few weeks
    2. Currently completing reviews to expand project boundaries to encompass the whole communities of Dulzura, Campo, and Potrero
    3. Looking forward to lessons learned from the first few homes.
  - iii. Compliance Contractors
    1. Solicitation for a Compliance Contractor closed recently.
    2. Compliance Contractor will monitor activities to ensure workers employed by County Contractors and their subcontractors are hired and paid in compliance with labor standards.
- c. Closed Session
- No reportable items from the closed session.

**VII. FUTURE MEETING SCHEDULE**

- a. Third Tuesday of each month starting at 10:00 AM and ending at 12:00 PM.
- b. November/December meeting combined on November 28, 2023.
- c. Next CWMP Board Meeting will take place on January 16, 2024.
  - California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) Building  
2nd Floor Conference Room 2-221, 715 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

**VIII. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

- a. No Board Member comments.

**IX. PUBLIC COMMENT**

- a. Mark Burton on the increased fire insurance rates in California.
- b. Ron Lovick on the increased fire insurance rates in California.

**X. MEETING ADJOURNMENT – 12:36 PM**

**Motion:** F. Bigelow moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:36 PM.

R. Troy seconded the motion.

**Action:** All in Favor, none opposed, motion carried.