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# CALIFORNIA WILDFIRE MITIGATION PROGRAM BOARD MEETING

## Meeting Minutes – Tuesday, March 19, 2024

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### **Board Members Present**

Daniel Berlant, Board Chair, State Fire Marshal, CAL FIRE  
Abby Browning, Board Vice-Chair, Chief, Private Sector NGO Coordination, Cal OES  
Robert Troy, Board Member, Assistant Director, Recovery, Cal OES  
Frank Bigelow, Board Member, Deputy Director, Community Wildfire Preparedness & Mitigation and Fire Engineering & Investigations, CAL FIRE

### **CWMP Staff Present**

J. Lopez, Executive Director  
Jordon Boyer, Staff Manager  
Sarah Glenn, Program Coordinator  
Matthew Delgado, Program Coordinator  
Kenneth Jacobs-DeLeon, Program Coordinator

### **Cal OES Staff Present**

Robyn Fennig, Assistant Director, Hazard Mitigation  
Ron Miller, Branch Chief, Hazard Mitigation Assistance  
Ryan Massello, Division Chief, Hazard Mitigation  
Lisa Long SSM I, Hazard Mitigation Special Projects  
Brian Doss, AGPA, Hazard Mitigation Special Projects  
Adriana Arevalo, SSA, Hazard Mitigation Special Projects  
Melissa Boudrye, Branch Chief, Hazard Mitigation Resilience Branch (Virtual)  
Carl DeNigris, Assistant Chief Counsel (Virtual)  
David Neill, Assistant Chief Counsel (Virtual)

### **CAL FIRE Staff Present**

John Morgan, Staff Chief (TAU) of Wildfire Risk Reduction  
Dennis O'Neil, Assistant Chief  
Kara Garrett, Deputy State Fire Marshal III (Specialist)  
Carrie Lewis, AGPA  
Justine Grafton, AGPA  
Will Brewer, GIS Analyst (Virtual)  
Randy Northup, Battalion Chief  
Madison Nicholas, SSA  
Juliana Contreras, SSA

**I. CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME – 10:00 AM**

- a. The meeting was called to order at 10:00 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 – Present
  - R. Troy – Present
  - F. Bigelow – Present

**III. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES**

- a. Review and approval of Meeting Minutes from February 20, 2024. No public comments received.

**Motion:** A. Browning moved to approve Meeting Minutes from February 20, 2024.

R. Troy seconded the motion.

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

**IV. APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA**

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

**Motion:** R. Troy moved to approve Agenda for March 19, 2024.

F. Bigelow 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. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Environmental Historical Preservation (EHP) Update
      - 1. Subject matter Expert (SME) and Community EHP Transition with FEMA
        - a. Tuolumne County completed February 7, 2024
        - b. San Diego Completed February 22, 2024
        - c. Lake Completed March 8, 2024
        - d. Shasta Completed March 15, 2024
        - e. El Dorado County will be scheduled as soon as SME

contract is signed.

ii. Budget and Scope of Work (SOW) Updates

1. Background

- a. Current estimate is \$40,000 per home.
- b. Cost estimates were based on data from over three years ago.
- c. Costs have risen due to inflation and supply/demand.
- d. Each Subrecipient will need to request a scope of work change.

2. Planned FEMA subaward SOW changes.

- a. Average cost of bids will help determine the average cost per home.
  - i. The target number of homes proposed in the original SOW will need to be reduced as the average cost per home increases.
  - ii. Total Project Cost will not increase.

iii. HMGP Grants Expenditures

- 1. Review of total project expenditures through December 2023 for each community.
  - a. Project Costs
  - b. Management Costs

iv. Demo of the CWMP Portal Administration Tool – Lisa Long

- 1. System of Record for the Homeowner, Community, CalOES, CAL FIRE, and FEMA
- 2. Collects all data needed to administer each site and grant
- 3. Homeowner Application
- 4. Application Review and Approval
- 5. EHP Review and Checklists
- 6. Sitework progress and payment tracking

- CAL FIRE Update – Assistant Chief Dennis O'Neil

- i. Conducted a CWMP HIZ/DSI Assessor Training for Shasta County Fire Safe Council (SCFSC) and North Coast Opportunities (NCO) March 14-15th. Field Days are set for SCFSC on March 20 and NCO on March 21, 2024.
- ii. Recently sent out our CWMP Retrofit List and Minimum Quality Standards Version Two documents to stakeholders for review.
- iii. Still working on the multi-structure assessment issue with our CWMP application.

b. California Wildfire Mitigation Program (CWMP) Program Update

- Shasta County/Shasta County Fire Safe Council (FSC) – Kenneth Jacobs-DeLeon

i. Home Assessor Training

- 1. The Western Shasta Resource Conservation District recently completed classroom portion of the CWMP Home Assessor Training hosted by CAL FIRE

- 2. Four RCD staff members participated in this training.
    - 3. Field training portion to be completed March 20, 2024
  - ii. EHP Update
    - 1. Meeting was held to facilitate Community and SME EHP transition to FEMA on March 15, 2024.
  - iii. Tri Party Agreement is in development.
    - 1. Currently in the process of undergoing legal review.
- San Diego County/San Diego County Fire Department – Sarah Glenn
  - i. EHP Update:
    - 1. Meeting was held to facilitate Community and SME EHP transition to FEMA on February 22, 2024.
    - 2. FEMA has received the revised draft of the Biological Analysis (BA) and is currently under review.
  - ii. No-Issue Properties
    - 1. Preparing to go out for contractor quotes on no-issue property in Dulzura.
    - 2. Scope of Work complete for a no-issue property in Campo.
  - iii. Outreach and Program Coordination
    - 1. Meeting with Homeowner’s Association (HOA) in Campo to review HOA application process.
    - 2. Plan to develop streamlined approval process to complete work within the HOA.
- Siskiyou County/Shasta Valley Resource Conservation District (SVRCD) – Sarah Glenn
  - i. Scope of Work (SOW) and Bid Form Development.
    - 1. SVRCD will be the first community to utilize the new streamlined MQS Version Two, SOW, and Bid Form combined template.
    - 2. They have completed their first SOW and it has gone through QA.
  - ii. Tri-Party Agreement
 

The Tri-party agreement is in development, pending finalization.
- Lake County/North Coast Opportunities (NCO) – Matt Delgado
  - i. Staffing
    - 1. Three additional project coordinators
    - 2. Home assessor training March 21, 2024
    - 3. Contractor Update
  - ii. Program Ramp Up
- Tuolumne County – Matt Delgado
  - i. EHP Phase I Update
    - 1. Received first deliverables from SMEs.
    - 2. Collating all deliverables to send to FEMA for review.
  - ii. Community Update
    - 1. Meeting Scheduled for April 25, 2024

## 2. Expectation setting

- El Dorado County – Matt Delgado
  - i. EHP Phase I intent to award has been issued.
    - 1. Proceeding with the award process according to their system
- c. Approval of engagement of Sloan Sakai Yeung & Wong, LLP as CWMP General Counsel – J. Lopez
  - J. Lopez is seeking approval to sign the contract with Sloan Sakai Yeung & Wong, LLP upon completion of the final review.
    - i. The budget has \$230,000 for Legal Counsel, Treasury, Audit, and Insurance.
      - 1. Legal Counsel has a set limit of \$100,000 per year for the next four years.
    - ii. There are two options to move forward.
      - 1. The Board can approve/ratify the agreement with counsel at the next meeting.
      - 2. The Board can delegate the authority to J. Lopez to sign the contract, the Board will then Affirm the agreement at the next meeting.

**Motion:** R. Troy moved to delegate the authority to J. Lopez to engage with counsel and bring it back to the next scheduled meeting to Affirm the agreement.

F. Bigelow seconded the motion.

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

## VI. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Staff Recommendations and Next Steps for the Home Hardening Demonstration Community Pilot Program (*Informational Only*)- Executive Director J. Lopez
  - Form 700 for CWMP Board Members and Staff
    - i. Thank you, Board and Staff for submitting your Forms
  - State Controller's Office
    - i. 2023 fiscal year Financial Transaction Reports submitted to the State Controller's Office (SCO) for Special District **California Wildfire Mitigation Program Authority**
    - ii. 2023 Government Compensation in California (GCC) report submitted to the State Controller's Office (SCO) for Special District **California Wildfire Mitigation Program Authority**
- Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 6 on Public Safety, Budget Hearing

- i. FY 2021-22 Extension of the California Wildfire Mitigation Program Liquidation Period. Requesting the liquidation of \$15,986,000 General Fund for the California Wildfire Mitigation Program be extended from June 30, 2025, to June 30, 2029, to complete wildfire home hardening activities.
  - ii. Wildfire Home Hardening – FY 2023-24 (SB 101) \$12 million General Fund reversion.
  - iii. Wildfire Home Hardening – FY 2022-23 (AB 179) \$13 million Siskiyou & Riverside Counties. Not discussed.
  - iv. Prior to Hearing: Responded to Several Inquiries by the Department of Finance and the Legislative Analyst's Office
- Legislative Report
  - i. Obtained Legislative Report Policy and Procedures and Template from Cal OES
  - ii. Received other Legislative Report Examples from Cal OES, CAL FIRE, CNRA and CEA
  - iii. Information collection from current and original program staff
  - iv. Draft started by CWMP Staff
  - v. Draft will be presented at the April CWMP Board Meeting
- Assembly Bill No. 38 Report Requirements
  - i. An evaluation of the cost-effectiveness of the wildfire mitigation program compared to other structure hardening, defensible space, vegetation management, and fuel reduction incentive programs.
  - ii. An evaluation of the overall wildfire risk reduction achieved statewide through awards of financial assistance under the wildfire mitigation program.
  - iii. Detailed information about the quantity, monetary value, geographic distribution, and categories of awards of financial assistance made under the wildfire mitigation program.
  - iv. Detailed information about the sources and amounts of funds appropriated or granted to the wildfire mitigation program.
  - v. Detailed information about barriers encountered to completing work awarded financial assistance under the wildfire mitigation program, including state, regional, or local permitting requirements.
  - vi. Any other information the office determines is necessary or convenient to evaluate the financial assistance awarded under the program.
- Next Steps for Demonstration Project
  - i. Bringing our current communities together
    - 1. All Community Organizations Meeting in March
  - ii. CWMP Alignment Update
    - 1. California Department of Insurance, Safer from Wildfires Program
    - 2. California Department of Housing and Community

- Development, ReCoverCA Programs
    - 3. Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety (IBHS), Wildfire Prepared Home Certification
    - 4. Headwaters Economics, Wildfire Retrofit Reports
- b. North Coast Opportunities in Lake County Community Update, Deanna Fernweh, Project Manager, North Coast Opportunities, Inc
  - Challenges and Lessons Learned
    - i. Assessment app was in development so revised assessments were ongoing.
      - 1. Adding zone zero continued the revisions needed.
    - ii. Contracts and forms creation
      - 1. Request for Quote (RFQ) for contractors
      - 2. Request for Proposal (RFP) for SMEs – Phase I & Phase II
      - 3. Master Contract
      - 4. Tri-Party
    - iii. First two contractor procurements weren't as robust as expected causing further solicitations needed.
  - Key Accomplishments and Wins
    - i. Over 1,200 non-issue parcels
    - ii. SME Phase I report went smooth, and FEMA approved quickly.
    - iii. Umbrella California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) clearance achieved.
    - iv. Saved 1.1 million in HOA fees by developing rapport and strategic negotiations.
    - v. Robust Contractor and Defensible Space Vendor pool
    - vi. 200+ homeowners by word of mouth
  - Community and Partner Outreach Samplings
    - i. Field Assessment training with local AmeriCorps team to train in Defensible Space measures.
    - ii. Lake County Board of Supervisors presentation
    - iii. Community Rally with various community partners including Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Clearlake Environmental Research Center, local CAL FIRE and more.
    - iv. Field visits with teammate Tammy A. Program Manager for EPIC (Emergency Preparedness in Communities)
    - v. Quarterly Meet & Greet with Homeowners
  - Nesting Bird Survey was conducted and cleared for construction on our first residential property.
  - Construction has commenced.
    - i. Current Timeline
      - 1. 2023 - Local Program Development & Team Expansion
      - 2. Spring 2024 - Hammers swing
      - 3. Summer 2024 - Assessments scale up & Construction is in full swing.

4. Winter 2024/Spring 2025 – Scale Up

**VII. FUTURE MEETING SCHEDULE**

- a. Third Tuesday of each month starting at 10:00 AM and ending at 12:00 PM.
- b. Next CWMP Board Meeting will take place on April 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. A. Browning thankful for the work being done, excited for “hammers swinging”.
- b. R. Troy looking forward to continued progress. Introduced Robyn Fennig, the new Assistant Director, Hazard Mitigation.
- c. F. Bigelow, excited for the news about “hammers swinging”, even better news to hear that construction will begin this week, looking forward to updates next week.
- d. D. Berlant looking forward finalizing details on scheduling an event to celebrate with Lake County.

**IX. PUBLIC COMMENT**

- a. H. Rain on the inclusion of mobile homes in the updated retrofit list.

**X. MEETING ADJOURNMENT – 11:37 AM**

**Motion:** A. Browning moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:37 AM.

F. Bigelow seconded the motion.

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