



California Wildfire Mitigation Program Board Meeting

Meeting Minutes – Tuesday, October 15, 2024



Board Members Present

Abby Browning, Board Chair, Chief, Private Sector / Non-Governmental Organization Coordination, Cal OES

Frank Bigelow, Board Vice-Chair, Deputy Director, Community Wildfire Preparedness & Mitigation and Fire Engineering & Investigations, CAL FIRE

Daniel Berlant, Board Member, State Fire Marshal, CAL FIRE

Robert Troy, Board Member, Assistant Director, Interagency Recovery Coordination, Cal OES

CWMP Staff Present

J. Lopez, Executive Director

Jordon Boyer, Staff Manager

Sarah Glenn, Program Coordinator

Kenneth Jacobs-DeLeon, Program Coordinator

Cal OES Staff Present

Ron Miller, Branch Chief, Hazard Mitigation Assistance

Ryan Massello, Division Chief, Hazard Mitigation

Matthew Delgado, Staff Services Manager I, Hazard Mitigation Special Projects

Julie Leo, Associate Governmental Program Analyst, Hazard Mitigation Special Projects

Adriana Arevalo, Staff Services Analyst, Hazard Mitigation Special Projects

Carl DeNigris, Assistant Chief Counsel (Virtual)

Matteo Rodriguez, Sr. Environmental Planner, Wildfire Resilience Unit (Virtual)

Charmaine Faleaana, Associate Governmental Program Analyst, Hazard Mitigation Support Unit (Virtual)

CAL FIRE Staff Present

John Morgan, Staff Chief of Wildfire Risk Reduction

Dennis O'Neil, Assistant Chief, Home Hardening

Justine Grafton, Associate Governmental Program Analyst, Home Hardening

Will Brewer, GIS Analyst, Home Hardening

Vikkie Franklin, Staff Services Manager II

Carrie Lewis, Associate Governmental Program Analyst, OSFM Support Services

Madison Nicholas, Staff Services Analyst, OSFM Support Services

Danh Dao, Staff Services Analyst, OSFM Support Services

Joshua Mott, Information Officer II, Communications (Virtual)

Randy Northup, Battalion Chief (Virtual)

I. CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME – 10:02 AM

- a. The meeting was called to order at 10:02 AM and welcome remarks provided by Board Chair A. Browning.

II. ROLL CALL/QUORUM ESTABLISHED

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

III. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

- a. Review and approval of Meeting Minutes from September 17, 2024. No public comments received.

Motion: R. Troy moved to approve the Meeting Minutes from September 17, 2024.

F. Bigelow seconded the motion.

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

IV. 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. Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) Expenditures as of August 31, 2024
 - 1. Update on Total Project Costs per Sub-Applicant as of August 31, 2024.
 - 2. Updates will now be reported on a monthly basis.
 - ii. Engage CWMP Portal
 - 1. The CWMP Portal enhancements were completed in September.
 - a. Special Projects Unit is reviewing the user guide for all user types.
 - b. The Engage Portal will be demoed on October 25th for FEMA.
 - 2. We are in the process of soliciting a new contract.
 - a. Enhancements to data collection for retrofits and overall costs
 - b. Enhancements to the site record for ease of use

- CAL FIRE Update – Assistant Chief Dennis O’Neil
 - i. Released a beta version of the new CWMP Assessment Application to pilot communities for review.
 - ii. Toured the West Mount Shasta project with Shasta Valley RCD on September 18th.
 - iii. Attended a construction close out meeting for three homes that were recently completed by North Coast Opportunities in Lake County.
 - iv. CAL FIRE staff continue to support the California Wildfire Mitigation Program with technical assistance with recommended retrofits and associated standards.

- b. California Wildfire Mitigation Program (CWMP) Program Update
 - San Diego County/San Diego County Fire Protection District (SDCFPD) – Program Coordinator, Sarah Glenn
 - i. Site-Work Updates – Dulzura No-Issue Properties
 - 1. Vegetation Management work is complete.
 - 2. Home Hardening-
 - a. Walkthrough was held 9/05/2024, change order requested, pending quote for change order.
 - ii. Site-Work Updates – Campo No-Issue Properties
 - 1. Vegetation Management Complete.
 - 2. Home Hardening Quotes under review.
 - 3. Akilah met with HOA 10/05/2024 to conduct walkthrough and assessment demonstration.
 - 4. One additional no-issue assessment being conducted.

 - Siskiyou County/Shasta Valley Resource Conservation District (SVRCD) – Sarah Glenn
 - i. Site Work Updates
 - 1. Work is underway on the first eight sites.
 - 2. Site visit to view work in progress scheduled was held 9/18/2024.
 - ii. Project Ramp Up
 - 1. Bid walkthrough conducted 9/25/2024.
 - 2. Eight more properties went out for quote.
 - 3. Quotes under review

 - Shasta County/Shasta County Fire Safe Council (FSC) –Program Coordinator, Kenneth Jacobs-DeLeon.
 - i. Site Work
 - 1. Have completed Bid walk through for the first three homes.
 - a. Expecting bids within the next week
 - ii. Staff
 - 1. In the process of hiring a Labor Compliance Consultant
 - 2. One new assessor has been hired.
 - iii. FEMA
 - 1. Waiting for Biological Analysis (BA)

- Lake County/North Coast Opportunities (NCO) – Kenneth Jacobs-DeLeon.
 - i. Site Work
 1. Three Homes are in active construction.
 2. Four Homes coming up for bid.
 3. Six Scopes of Work are in development.
 4. Nine Homes have been completed.
 - ii. Staff
 1. One new assessor has been hired.
 - a. Looking to hire one more.
 - iii. Harbor Fire
 1. Three acres near project area
 2. No structural damage
 3. Three homes near site of fire have been assessed and one home has site work in progress.

- Tuolumne County – Kenneth Jacobs-DeLeon
 - i. EHP Phase I Update
 1. Phase I deliverables have been submitted to FEMA and are under review.
 - ii. Staff
 1. In the process of hiring two new staff members including a project manager.
 2. Receiving assistance from other Tuolumne OES staff member that is helping support the project.
 - iii. Upcoming Plans
 1. Once applications are being accepted, they plan to have another community meeting.
 2. Have a few homes identified as trial homes for when it's time to start training staff.

- El Dorado County – Kenneth Jacobs-DeLeon
 - i. Program Documents
 1. Continuing to work on drafts of the Master Agreement, Right of Entry and Tri-Party Agreement
 - a. Anticipate having the RFQ for the construction manager in process within the next couple of weeks.
 - ii. EHP Phase I
 1. Expanding project area
 - a. Some parcels were left out of the initial maps.
 - b. Working with FEMA to get the project area remapped and finalized.
 - iii. Website Update
 - a. Updates to the website have been successful and several interested homeowners have submitted their contact information.

- c. Executive Director Update – J. Lopez
 - General Counsel Update
 - i. Contract with Sloan Sakai Yeung & Wong, LLP to serve as CWMP General Counsel
 - ii. The contract is with Department of General Services (DGS)
 - Legislative Report
 - i. Cal OES and CAL FIRE leadership review completed and approved.
 - ii. Cal OES moving report to Governor's Office for review and approval.
 - iii. Once report is reviewed by the Governor's Office it will come back to the Board for final approval.
 - iv. Upon final Board approval the report will be submitted to the State legislature with cover Letter from Cal OES and CAL FIRE Directors
 - v. Board Chair Browning requests a special session to review and approve the report when it comes back from the Governor's Office.
 - Media Strategy Review
 - i. Press Releases, Media Events
 - ii. Social media Posting Training, project walkthrough, closeouts, etc.
 - iii. The Executive Director to meet with the CAL FIRE and Cal OES Deputy Directors of communications to coordinate the levels of engagement that they will involve.
 - Support to Local and State Wildfire Home Hardening Efforts
 - i. Support to Local and State Wildfire Home Hardening Efforts
 - 1. Since last month we have met with Sonoma County, Napa County, California Fire Safe Council, and the Ventura Regional Fire Safe Council.
 - 2. We will continue with plan to provide assistance and guidance.
 - Programmatic Agreement & Programmatic Biological Opinion
 - i. Programmatic Agreement between the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the California State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), and the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES). Effective: November 7, 2019.
 - 1. Home Hardening Allowable Activities
 - a. F. Wildfire Recovery and Mitigation, when proposed activities substantially conform to the original footprint and/or are performed in previously disturbed soils, including the area where the activity is staged.
 - i. 4. Wildfire-Resistant Structure Hardening
 - a. Installation of a removable spark arrester on chimney and/or stovepipe outlets
 - ii. Programmatic Biological Opinion U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ecological Services Effective: 2019.
 - 1. Programmatic Biological Opinion for the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Disaster, Mitigation, and Preparedness

Programs.

2. New FEMA Regional Environmental Officer
 - a. Exploring opportunities to further streamline EHP reviews through participation in agreement documents with state and federal partners.
 - b. Assembled State Team:
 - i. Cal OES
 - ii. CAL FIRE
 - iii. Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal VTP)
 - iv. Requesting California State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) participation
 - c. FEMA will be setting up meetings and discussions will begin at a later date.

- State Legislation Update
 - i. SB 946 - This bill, for taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2024, and before January 1, 2029, provides an exclusion from gross income for amounts received by a qualified taxpayer, as defined, as a California qualified wildfire loss mitigation payment, as defined.
 1. This bill has passed and is effective immediately.
 - ii. Proposition 4 – Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024.
 - a. The proposition is on the November 5, 2024, ballot. We hope to have an update on this by the November Board Meeting.
 - b. Grants, in coordination with the Public Utilities Commission, to local agencies, state agencies, special districts, joint powers authorities, tribes, and nonprofit organizations for zero-emission backup power, energy storage, and microgrids for critical community infrastructure in order to provide continuity of electrical service, reduced wildfire ignitions, and to safeguard communities from disruption due to de-energization events, wildfire, or air pollution caused by wildfire, extreme heat, or other disaster.
 - c. Grants under the Home Hardening Program to retrofit, harden, or create defensible space for homes at high risk of wildfire in order to protect California communities.

- Bringing Our Communities Together
 - i. Meetings scheduled for first Thursday of each Month.
 - ii. October Guest Speaker: Deputy Commissioner Julia Juarez, California Department of Insurance.
 1. Spoke about the Safer from Wildfires program. Discussed the potential discounts that could become available for participants of the CWMP.

2. Support effort to sustain the work we are doing by helping the homeowners maintain insurance and discounts.
- CWMP Projects Implementation
 - i. Provide SME Support to each community organization.
 1. Deck Retrofit, Gutter system retrofit, Propane Tank Screen Retrofit, Disabled Vehicle Removal
 - ii. Collection of expenditure data per property
 - CWMP Alignment Process:
 1. Firewise USA, met on October 1st.
 - a. They support the focus on community and neighborhood level.
 2. California Department of Housing and Community Development, ReCoverCA Programs
 3. California Department of Insurance, Safer from Wildfires Program
 4. Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety (IBHS), Wildfire Prepared Home Designation
 5. Headwaters Economics
 6. California Fire Safe Council
 - 0 to 5 Feet Zone
 - i. Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains Zone Zero Retrofit Program
 1. General Scope of Work (based on approval to proceed):
 - a. Provide (1) remote site study.
 - b. Prepare schematic guide to inform proposed work.
 2. Execution of work
 - a. Confirm and Layout areas of work.
 - b. Removal of plant materials and green waste
 - c. Remove waste materials from site (dumps and hauling)
 - d. Relocate/modify existing irrigation outside area of work.
 - e. Prepare areas for permeable weed barrier and gravel.
 - f. Placement of permeable weed barrier
 - g. Placement of gravel
 - h. Deliveries and equipment
 3. Excludes
 - a. New irrigation systems
 - b. Demolition of hardscape/walls
 - c. Drainage
 - d. Repairs to structure exterior (existing conditions - i.e stucco, dry rot, waterproofing, etc.)
 4. Four to Six days per job Average
 5. 16 to 20 jobs for this period (based on average site 650 sf of work area)

6. Estimated budget range per project - \$20 to \$22/square foot per project.
- Costs to Homeowner
 - i. The program is designed to eliminate barriers for disadvantaged communities to undertake mitigation activities and to incentivize wildfire home hardening and defensible space in the most socially vulnerable and highest fire risk communities.
 - ii. The program incorporates a “community hardening” strategy to fortify neighborhoods, as opposed to scattered sites of homeowners who have the means to harden their homes.
 - iii. To incentivize maximum neighborhood participation, the program covers the full cost of retrofit and defensible space implementation activities, upwards of \$40,000 (2020), for homeowners who make under 120 percent of the area median income. However, the CWMP is designed to work with all community members and has established income guidelines for participation.
 - iv. To achieve mitigation benefits, we must encourage participation of as many homeowners in the demonstration areas as possible.
 1. A sliding scale will allow all homeowners in target neighborhoods to participate to achieve maximum resiliency benefits without allocating substantial state funds to non-LMI participants.
 2. Participation limits promote lower income neighborhoods are prioritized.
 - v. The current cost scale by income bracket is broken down into three categories.
 1. Household income less than 120% of the Area Median Income (AMI) has 0% cost share.
 2. Household income between 120% and 200% of the AMI has 10% cost share.
 3. Household income over 200% of the AMI has 25% cost share.
 - vi. Proposed options.
 1. Option One:
 - a. Keep the homeowner cost scale as it is, no changes.
 2. Option Two:
 - a. Household income less than 120% of the AMI remains 0% cost share.
 - b. Household income between 120% and 200% of the AMI would have a 5% cost share.
 - c. Household income over 200% of the AMI would have a 10% cost share.
 3. Option Three:
 - a. Cost Share would be a percentage of Total Project Cost for 120-200% AMI & >200% AMI.
 4. The Board Members request more time for review.
 - a. Ultimately, we need to maximize the state, local, and

- federal dollars and retrofit the most homes possible in a neighborhood and community.
- b. Need more analysis and information on effects of the various communities across the state.
- c. Need to review the past documentation, confirm the Board has the discretion to make changes to the determinations.
- d. The Board requests a report with more detail and the history of the determinations.

V. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Next Steps for the Demonstration Project – J. Lopez
 - CWMP Funding Budget Act 2022 (AB-179) Funding \$13 Million
 - i. \$6 Million Committed to Siskiyou County for HMGP Grant
 - ii. \$7 Million Committed to Riverside County for HMGP Grant
 - Clearinghouse Data Center
 - i. Cal OES Hosted CWMP website has been added to the CAL FIRE/Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) Clearinghouse Data Center as a resource for Community Wildfire Mitigation Assistance.
 - ii. Assembly Bill Nine also created 4209.5 – the Community Wildfire Mitigation Assistance Program which required the creation of Clearinghouse.
 - 1. The intention is that clearinghouse is loaded with validated information.
 - 2. Staff validates requests to be added to the clearinghouse as well as validation of the links. Links and documents are verified weekly.
- b. Consideration and approval of CWMP Story Maps for Publishing and Distribution – Kenneth Jacobs-DeLeon
 - Presentation of the Draft CWMP Program Story Map and Template Community Story Maps.
 - i. Collaboration between CWMP Staff and CAL FIRE.
 - ii. The Board provided positive feedback on the Storymaps and the proven effectiveness of using Storymaps, snippets, and images.
 - iii. The Board requests an email with the link to view the Storymaps and provide feedback.

VI. 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 November 19, 2024.
 - Meeting Location: San Diego County Fire Station #36 14024 Peaceful Valley Ranch Rd, Jamul, CA 91935
 - Off Cycle Time Change – Meeting time will be 11:30 am to 12:30 pm.
- c. Media Event will take place and completed homesite in Dulzura from 10:00 am to 11:00 am.

VII. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

- a. A. Browning appreciates the hard work going into the programs, she understands the difficulties of dealing with bureaucracy while moving forward with the program.
- b. F. Bigelow thankful for all of the hard work.
- c. R. Troy thankful for the good work and the progress of this program.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

- a. No public comments received.

IX. Meeting Adjournment - 11:27 AM

Motion: F. Bigelow moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:27 am.

R. Troy seconded the motion.

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