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# WILDFIRE MITIGATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

## Meeting Minutes – Tuesday, February 19, 2024

Posted: March 6, 2024

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### Committee Members Present In-Person

Anale Burlew, Department of Forestry and Fire Protection  
Brian Newman-Lindsay, Department of Conservation  
Daniel Berlant, CAL FIRE – Office of the State Fire Marshal  
Caroline Thomas Jacobs, Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety (Virtual)  
J. Lopez, State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection  
Deborah Halberstadt, California Department of Insurance (Virtual)  
Michael Maguire, Office of Planning and Research  
Nick Cammarota, Representative from the Building Industry  
Staci Heaton, Rural County Representatives of California  
Sean McGlynn, League of California Cities  
Steve Hawks, Retired Annuitant  
Jacy Hyde, California Fire Safe Council

### Committee Members Present Via Zoom

Todd Lando, Local Fire Service Representative  
Sophia Lemmo, California Association of Resource Conservation Districts  
Roy Wright, Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety  
Clay Kerchof, Department of Housing and Community Development  
Roy Wright, Insurance Industry  
Lenya N. Quinn-Davidson, University of California Cooperative Extension  
Don Hankins, Professor, CSU Chico

### Members Absent

Catherine Freeman, California State Association of Counties  
Nancy Ward, Office of Emergency Services  
Yana Valachovic, California Fire Science Consortium  
Samuel Assefa, State Planning and Research

### CAL FIRE Staff in Attendance

Wendy Collins, Assistant State Fire Marshal  
Frank Bigelow, Deputy Director  
Andrew Henning, Assistant Deputy Director  
Jim McDougald, Staff Chief  
Matt Damon, Staff Chief  
Crystal Sujeski, Staff Chief  
Heather McCulley, Assistant Chief (Virtual)  
John Morgan, Staff Chief  
Dennis O'Neil, Assistant Chief (Virtual)  
Gene Potkey, Assistant Chief (Virtual)  
Shane Galvez, Battalion Chief (Virtual)  
Carmel Barnhart, Deputy Chief (Virtual)  
Scott Witt, Deputy Chief (Virtual)  
Justine Grafton, Staff Services Analyst (Virtual)

Anthony Massucco, Battalion Chief (Virtual)  
Jeff Hakala, Division Chief (Virtual)  
Chris Ramey, Division Chief (Virtual)  
Rudy Baltazar, Division Chief (Virtual)  
Melissa Curtis, Battalion Chief  
Mark Rosenberg, Research Data Manager (Virtual)  
Kara Garrett, Deputy State Fire Marshal III  
Carrie Lewis, Associate Governmental Program Analyst

**1. CALL TO ORDER 1:00 PM**

A. Welcome

**Daniel Berlant**

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 PM by Daniel Berlant.

B. Roll Call – Carrie Lewis

Quorum established with 12 committee members present in-person, and 7 attending virtually. Quorum requires 11 to be present in one location, quorum was met.

C. Approval of November 28, 2023 Meeting Minutes – Daniel Berlant

<b>Motion:</b>	Motion made by J. Lopez, seconded by Staci Heaton, motion passed
<b>Action:</b>	NA

D. Approval of January 5, 2024 Meeting Minutes – Daniel Berlant

<b>Motion:</b>	Motion made by Sean McGlynn, seconded by Steve Hawks, motion passed
<b>Action:</b>	NA

E. Agenda Review – Daniel Berlant

<b>Motion:</b>	Motion made by Anale Burlew, seconded by Caroline Thomas Jacobs, motion passed
<b>Action:</b>	NA

**2. OLD BUSINESS**

**Daniel Berlant / Frank Bigelow**

A. Division Report –

i. Wildfire Preparedness –

1. Defensible Space:

a. Statewide SRA Total for Fiscal Year-To-Date 2023-2024:

- i. 146,162 inspections completed, 58% of the goal (250,000 Goal)
- 2. Burn Permits:
  - a. Statewide SRA Fiscal Year-To-Date 2023-2024:
    - i. 45,832 requested – 41,800 issued
    - ii. 92,898 issued since the Jan 03, 2023, launch.
- 3. Home Hardening:
  - a. CAL FIRE staff continue to support the California Wildfire Mitigation Program (CWMP) program.
  - b. Conducted a DSI/HIZ Training for the San Diego pilot community on February 14 and have tentatively scheduled a training for the Shasta pilot community for March. <https://www.fire.ca.gov/home-hardening>
  - c. On January 17th, CAL FIRE staff was going to present a discussion on the California Wildland-Urban Interface Code as part of the Office of the State Fire Marshal webinar series. This event was cancelled and will be held on a later date.
- 4. Utility Wildfire Mitigation Program:
  - a. The last Wildfire Mitigation Plan (WMP) was published on 2/12/23 which concludes over 450 hours of meetings with the CPUC and Energy Safety for the 2023 plans.
  - b. Progress has begun for the 2026-2028 WMP updates and a rewrite of multiple sections is currently underway.
  - c. Will be conducting a PRC 4292/4293 Powerline Safety and Identification training course with member of Energy Safety, CPUC, and other agencies on 3/19/2024.
- i. Wildfire Planning and Statistics –
  - 1. Fuel Reduction Projects:
    - a. 515 projects, 103% of the goal
  - 2. Combined Fuel Reduction:
    - a. 44,544 acres treated, 44.5% of the goal
      - i. Unit Projects – 27,872.5 acres
        - 1. Northern Region: 17,283.5 acres
        - 2. Southern Region: 10,589 acres
    - b. Grant Projects: 12,449.2 acres
    - c. CFIP Projects: 4,222.4 acres
  - 3. Prescribed Fire (also counted in fuel reduction):
    - a. 20,717.5 acres treated, 41.1% of the goal
  - 4. Fire Hazard Severity Zones:
    - a. State Responsibility Area (SRA):
      - i. Approved by the Office of Administrative Law on January 31, 2024.

- ii. Effective April 1, 2024
  - iii. We continue our efforts to develop a roll out plan for the Local Responsibility Area maps pursuant to the recent updates to Government Code 51178.
- 5. Pre-Fire Planning:
  - a. Annual fire perimeter collection is ongoing and due March 1, 2024, from the Units, to be aggregated with federal datasets in early spring.
  - b. 5-year SRA review will begin spring 2024, to be concluded June 2025.
  - c. Annual Unit Fire Plan update, due May 10, 2024.
- 6. CalStats:
  - a. Submitted our contributions and feedback for the new NERIS (National Emergency Response Information System) Framework and Data Schemas.
  - b. Beginning to develop the 2023 Red Book Report (CAL FIRE's Fire Prevention Report to the Legislature).
- 7. Wildland Fuels Reduction Reporting:
  - a. PFIRS Data – collaborating with the California Air Resources Board (CARB) on identifying differences between CalMAPPER prescribed burn acres and reported prescribed burn acres in PFIRS and by the US EPA for consistent reporting.
  - b. CalMAPPER upgrade – finalizing the statement of work for the new CalMAPPER desktop version and mobile application build with Technosylva.
- ii. Community Wildfire Mitigation Assistance –
  - 1. Land Use Planning:
    - a. Staff continue working with jurisdictions to update the local Safety Elements in their General Plans statewide.
    - b. Currently two Safety Elements will be up for review at the March RPC Meeting.
    - c. Staff are active in supporting local jurisdictions and CAL FIRE Units with the State Minimum Fire Safe Regulations.
  - 2. NFPA Firewise USA:
    - a. Program staff are working with NFPA Firewise USA to maintain “good standing” for 2023 communities needing to renew their applications to be current in 2024.
    - b. NFPA rolls their community portal over each January nationwide to status communities as archived, not renewed, and good standing.
    - c. Currently 784 communities in good standing. This number may fluctuate over the next few weeks as we work with NFPA to finalize the yearly renewals.

3. Subdivision Review (SDR):
  - a. Continue to work with jurisdictions throughout the state in identifying subdivisions that meet PRC 4290.5 criteria.
  - b. Staff will be conducting field surveys in Marin County in February.
  - c. Several jurisdictions in the northern part of the state are engaged and will be surveyed in the near future.
  - d. Continued collaboration meetings with many statewide jurisdictions.
  
4. Local Planner Training:
  - a. Introduction to Land Use Planning for Wildfires in California course:
    - i. Registration now open for at least 10 training dates in 2024
    - ii. Register at [www.communitywildfire.org/trainings](http://www.communitywildfire.org/trainings)
    - iii. First trainings held recently – 2/6 in Riverside and 2/8 in Sierra Madres
    - iv. Next up will be San Diego on 2/27 and Lake Forest on 2/29
  
5. Wildfire Prevention Grants Program:
  - a. FY 2023-24 Wildfire Prevention Grants closed on January 10, 2024.
  - b. Received 224 applications requesting \$254,242,614.85 in funding.
  - c. Local Units working on preliminary review now.
  - d. Use the QR code below to visit the Grants Website:
    - i. [www.fire.ca.gov/what-we-do/grants/wildfire-prevention-grants](http://www.fire.ca.gov/what-we-do/grants/wildfire-prevention-grants)



ii.

B. California Wildfire Mitigation Program (CWMP) Report –

i. CWMP Program:

1. Three community organizations began conducting contractor's walkthrough to obtain quotes.
2. Two community organizations are hiring phase 1 vendors.
3. Engaging with two more community organizations \$13 million.
4. Conducted a CWMP HIZ/DSI Assessor Training for San Diego County. Fire Department on February 14-16 for 17 pilot community assessors.

- ii. FEMA Grant Allowable Replacements:
  - 1. Metal/non-combustible firewood enclosures
    - a. Total retrofits are within allotted home hardening budget.
  - 2. Wheelchair accessible ramps.
  - 3. Other replacements need to be reviewed by FEMO.
    - a. Provide required code or ordinance.
    - b. Best course of action based on latest wildfire propagation research

C. Board of Forestry and Fire Protection Report

- i. Effectiveness Monitoring Committee
  - 1. Approval of the funding recommendations for EMC project proposal: Assessing Fire Hazard, Risk and Post Recovery for Watercourse and Lake Protection Zones and riparian areas of California. To be completed by June 2025.  
[https://bof.fire.ca.gov/media/3jcd5wfs/full-6-c-i-emc-2023-002-full-proposal-revised\\_adamfk.pdf](https://bof.fire.ca.gov/media/3jcd5wfs/full-6-c-i-emc-2023-002-full-proposal-revised_adamfk.pdf)
- ii. Presentations
  - 1. Exemption and Emergency Report on Post-Fire Salvage Emergency Notice Monitoring  
<https://bof.fire.ca.gov/media/pasdnhnl/full-14-bof-emergency-report-final-01222024.pdf>
- iii. Resource Protection Committee
  - 1. Land Use Planning Program Update
  - 2. Subdivision Review Program Update Contra Costa County
    - a. City of Riverside
    - b. City of Corona
    - c. City of Malibu
- iv. Safety Element Reviews
  - 1. City of San Mateo
  - 2. City of Yorba Linda
  - 3. City of Paradise  
[https://bof.fire.ca.gov/media/imrd5p5w/rpc-2-b-iii-safety-element\\_draft\\_12-2023\\_adamfk.pdf](https://bof.fire.ca.gov/media/imrd5p5w/rpc-2-b-iii-safety-element_draft_12-2023_adamfk.pdf)
- v. LRA Fire Hazard Severity Zones Local
  - 1. LRA Fire Hazard Severity Zones Local Ordinance Submission Rulemaking – Edith Hannigan, Executive Officer  
[RPC 3\(b\) LRA FHSZ 2024 Rule Plead](#)

### 3. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Approval of revised charter to add CA Natural Resources Agency representative

<b>Motion:</b>	Motion made by Sean McGlynn, seconded by Jacy Hyde, motion passed
<b>Action:</b>	NA

- B. The California Department of Insurance presented on “Safer from Wildfires”.  
i. The presentation can be found on the [WMAC website](#).

### 4. ROUNDTABLE

**Daniel Berlant**

- A. Anale Burlew – CAL FIRE:  
i. Not a lot of fire activity but have been busy with storm-related activities.  
ii. Scheduled in March to start hiring back the firefighter hand crew, they will begin working in early April.  
iii. Budget included the 66-hour workweek for CAL FIRE firefighters and will hopefully improve recruitment and retention.
- B. Daniel Berlant – OSFM:  
i. OSFM joined the Department of Insurance, a few insurance associations, Cal Chiefs representative, Cal Poly’s WUI Institute, Milliman Group and others on a Wildfire Alignment webinar to talk about wildfire mitigation as well as how it parallels with the work being done by the insurance industry. The link to the webinar is available [here](#).
- C. Brian Newman Lindsay – Department of Conservation  
i. There has been an increase in the funding for multi-benefit projects that create large landscape scale implementation work. We saw Wildlife Conservation Board and other habitat restoration funding go to wildfire focused projects in Southern California, San Diego, Tahoe, etc.
- D. Michael McGuire – State Planning and Research  
i. OPR is in the process of issuing three grant awards for the Wood Feed Stock Aggregation Pilot project. The goal is to have these under contract before May 1. The objective with this round of funding, is to utilize the various different plans that have been developed in rounds one and two to stand up a series of wildfire prevention authorities across 17 counties located in Northern California. These public entities will all be operating as biomass brokers. If you have a need to find a home for any Woody biomass that has been generated off your projects please let him know.  
ii. In the process of developing a testing zone in Marin County for a digital marketplace that is essentially an option mechanism to connect landowners, LTOs, and operators for biomass navigation.
- E. Jacy Hyde – California Fire Safe Council  
i. Has a funding opportunity open – the State Fire Capacity program is in partnership with the forest service providing small grants to local communities who are trying to do vegetation management, update their CWPPs, and other

activities. There's a little over \$1.5M available for this. If you are representing small community organizations that have a smaller project, this is a great opportunity for that. These are also good first step grants for those who are getting into the federal grant game and don't want to jump into a very large grant with their first try. Available on their website for another month or so.

- ii. Working now to replace county coordinators in the last six counties – Alameda, San Francisco, Imperial, Stanislaus, King and Merced. The hope is to have them placed by spring.
- iii. Western interstate region, which is the regional counties in the western states, is meeting in Mariposa May 8-10. This is an opportunity to meet with elected officials from the western states.

## 5. PUBLIC COMMENT

Daniel Berlant

- A. Jason Willet – CFA Insurance/AAA Insurance of Northern California
  - i. Has been offering discounts to their customers for some years now. The industry and IBHS are doing a lot to promote the science-based. Doing a landscape design contest at UC Berkely right now focused on reducing the ignition zones around homes. Some grad students are developing plans that will be publicized in the next couple months. Customers are resistant to relandscaping their homes due to affordability.
- B. Bob Sullivan – NFPA Southwest Regional Director
  - i. Introduced himself as a resource and offered to present at future meetings.

## 6. UPCOMING MEETING DATE FOR 2024

Daniel Berlant

- A. Third Tuesday of the month from 1:00-3:00 PM.
- B. March 19, 2024
  - i. CNRA Building, 715 P Street, 2nd Floor Conference Room, **2-302 (A/B)**, Sacramento, CA 95814

## 7. MEETING ADJOURNED 3:00 PM

Daniel Berlant

<b>Motion:</b>	Motion made by Jacy Hyde, seconded by J Lopez, motion passed
<b>Action:</b>	NA

If you would like to watch the recording of this meeting, please visit the link below:

<https://youtu.be/rc7Ui0lihEq>