
WILDFIRE MITIGATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Meeting Minutes – Tuesday, September 17, 2024

Posted: TBD



Committee Members Present

Daniel Berlant, CAL FIRE, Office of the State Fire Marshal
Anale Burlew, CAL FIRE
Brian Newman Lindsay, Department of Conservation
Caroline Thomas Jacobs, Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety
J. Lopez, State Board of Forestry & Fire Protection
Robert Troy, California Office of Emergency Services
Deborah Halberstadt, Insurance Commissioner's Office (Virtual)
Michael McGuire, State Planning & Research
Clay Kerchof, Department of Housing and Community Development (Virtual)
Jacy Hyde, California Fire Safe Council (Virtual)
Steve Hawks, Insurance Industry (Virtual)
Dave Winnacker, Local Fire Service Representative (Virtual)
Christopher Ochoa, Building Industry
Staci Heaton, Rural County Representatives of California (Virtual)
Sean McGlynn, League of California Cities
Catherine Freeman, California State Association of Counties
Lisa Lien-Mager, California Natural Resources Agency
Don Hankins, Tribal Government Representative (Virtual)
Sophia Lemmo, California Association of Resource Conservation Districts (Virtual)

Members Absent

Yana Valachovic, California Fire Science Consortium
Lena Quinn-Davidson, University of California Cooperative

CAL FIRE Staff in Attendance

Frank Bigelow, Deputy Director
Andrew Henning, Assistant Deputy Director
John Morgan, Staff Chief
Matt Damon, Staff Chief
Jim McDougald, Assistant Deputy Director
Emily Smith, Staff Chief
Jamie Sammut, Senior Staff Counsel
Madison Nicholas, Staff Services Analyst
Carrie Lewis, Associate Governmental Program Analyst
Julianna Contreras, Staff Services Analyst (Virtual)
Jillian Fisher, Staff Services Manager I
Danh Dao, Staff Services Analyst
Sean Fairbanks
Mark Rosenberg (Virtual)

1. CALL TO ORDER 1:05 PM

A. Welcome

Daniel Berlant

The meeting was called to order at 1:05 PM by Daniel Berlant.

B. Roll Call – Carrie Lewis

A quorum was established with 11 committee members present in-person and nine attending virtually.

C. Approval of August 20, 2024 Meeting Minutes (**Motion Required**) – Daniel Berlant

Motion: Anale Burlew moved to accept the August 20, 2024 meeting minutes; J. Lopez seconded the motion.

Action: All members voted unanimously to approve the motion.

D. Approval of September 17, 2024 Agenda (**Motion Required**) – Daniel Berlant

Motion: Chris Ochoa moved to accept the September 17, 2024 meeting minutes; Anale Burlew seconded the motion.

Action: All members voted unanimously to approve the motion.

2. UPDATES

A. Division Report

i. Wildfire Preparedness

1. Home Hardening

- 1) CAL FIRE staff have completed work on the new CWMP assessment application defensible space and surrounding parcel hazards sections and are currently working on the structure component section.
- 2) CAL FIRE staff continue to provide technical assistance to pilot communities with the program retrofits, minimum quality standards, and building material selection.

2. Defensible Space

- 1) Statewide SRA total for fiscal year-to-date 2023-2024:
 - i. 299,289 inspections completed, 120% of the 250,000 goal (inspection total not final)
 - ii. Qualified Entities training continues to draw interest from across the state. Recent classes were delivered in LA County and CAL FIRE's Lassen-Modoc Unit, where 41 students were taught how to conduct defensible space and home hardening assessments.

3. Burn Permits

- 1) Statewide SRA total for fiscal year-to-date 2024-2025:
 - i. 688 requested – 492 issued.
 - ii. 135,411 issued since the January 3, 2023 launch.

4. Utility Wildfire Mitigation Program
 - 1) Still on historical high for activated PSPS events for this early in fire season. PSPS with SCE was concluded last week affecting 8 counties.
 - 2) Training planned at Lone Training Center in November for 50 OEIS employees from several divisions.
 - 3) WMP still in review, final drafts decisions coming up – SDG&E, SCE end of October. BVEW, PG&E in November.
- i. Wildfire Planning and Statistics – [Fuels Reduction | CAL FIRE](#)
 1. Fuel Reduction Projects
 - a. 92 projects, 18.4% of the goal
 2. Combined Fuel Reduction
 - a. 1,750.5 acres treated, 1.8% of the goal
 - i. Unit Projects – 693.6 acres
 1. Northern Region: 340 acres
 2. Southern Region: 353.6 acres
 - b. Grant Projects: 500.4 acres
 - c. CFIP Projects: 556.6 acres
 3. Prescribed Fire (also counted in fuel reduction)
 - a. 114.4 acres treated, 0.2% of the goal
 6. Wildlands Fuels Reduction Reporting
 - a. Completed a review of the CalMAPPER Version 4 desktop slides with edits and suggestions to the vendor.
 - b. Working with CAL FIRE RDI to create a project tracking eFC33 validation application to assist units with validation of personnel hours.
 - c. CalMAPPER Managers Meetings will start to meet monthly to ensure we can accomplish requests from the CalMAPPER Steering Committee.
 7. Pre-Fire Planning
 - a. Provided a FTER public facing dashboard demonstration to CAL FIRE Executive. A few additional items are to be completed before the Green Sheet process. Once approved, the FTER dashboard will be available on the CAL FIRE website.
 - b. SRA Review Level 2 (Region Review) has been completed. SRA Review Level 3 (Sacramento) to take place on October 16, 2024.
 - c. The CWPP toolkit is in the final stage with a final review of all documents on September 20, 2024.
 - d. Annual Fire Plan Workshop is scheduled for November 12-15, 2024 at the CAL FIRE Natomas Training Center.

8. CalStats
 - a. The 2023 Redbook has been completed. This document will be available on the CAL FIRE webpage.
 - b. An updated Utility Wildfire Quality Assurance report has been sent to Unit CALFIRS coordinators and ECC Chiefs. This report highlights the need to review the accuracy of the report generated by the Utility Wildfire Mitigation Program. The new report allows units to provide feedback directly to the listed reports in question. This is a collaborative project between Cal Stats and Utility Wildfire Mitigation.
- ii. Community Wildfire Mitigation Assistance
 1. Land Use Planning
 - 1) Safety Elements Assessments
 - i. We currently have no cities or counties that have formally submitted for final review to the Board and our staff for the September RPC meeting.
 - ii. We had 11 safety elements reviewed and presented to RPC this quarter.
 2. National Fire Protection Association Firewise USA
 - 1) Currently there are 936 communities in good standing, with 10 NEW applications in the portal for review.
 - 2) Celebration of the the 900th community in good standing statewide was held in Dunsmuir on September 7.
 3. Land Use Planning for Wildfires Course
 - 1) Scheduled 4 classes dates in February of 2025.
 - i. 2/11/2025 - Chino
 - ii. 2/13/2025 – Newsbury Park (Ventura Co.)
 - iii. 2/25/2025 – Santa Rosa
 - iv. 2/27/2025 – Chico
 - 2) Planning in progress for additional dates in 2025
 - 3) Cadre will be presenting at APA California Conference in Riverside at the end of the month.
 4. Subdivision Review
 - 1) 25 Subdivision Review Fire Safety Surveys will be on the September RPC meeting agenda – 22 in Amador County and 3 in Alpine County.
 - 2) There are 64 jurisdictions (out of 191 total) left that need Fire Safety Surveys completed.
 5. [CWMA Statewide Clearinghouse Data Center](#)
 - 1) Hosts a wide array of documents, research articles, best practices, and other critical resources.

- 2) Each submission has undergone thorough review to ensure its relevance and value to wildfire preparedness, mitigation, and risk reduction

6. [Wildfire Prevention Grants Program](#)

- 1) FY 2023-24 Wildfire Prevention Grants Award notification on August 20, 2024
 - i. 94 awards totaling just over \$90M
 - ii. Info is posted on the Wildfire Prevention Grants website, and the CA State Library Grants portal.

B. California Wildfire Mitigation Program Update

- i. North Coast Opportunities in Lake County
 1. Additional 2 homes have been completed bringing the total to 5 homes finished
 2. Walkthroughs on September 10-11
 3. Harbor Fire: September 10, 1630 hours
 - 1) 3 acres in project area
 - 2) No structural damage



- ii. Tuolumne County
 1. FEMA EHP Phase I deliverables have been submitted to FEMA and are under review
 2. Canyon Fire: project area was included in evacuation order.
 3. Several questions from residents of the project area Canyon Fire has heightened awareness of the need for home hardening.
- iii. El Dorado County
 1. EHP Phase I deliverables are expected to be submitted to FEMA by the end of September.
- iv. Shasta County Fire Safe Council in Shasta County

1. The first RFQ for Defensible Space work on first 3 homes
2. Contractor bid walk September 5

v. Shasta Valley Resource Conservation District in Siskiyou County



1. Work is underway on the first 8 sites
2. Site visit to view work in progress scheduled for September 18, 2024

vi. San Diego County Fire Protection District

1. CWMP and CAL FIRE staff attended the CWMP San Diego County Fire Department pilot communities' construction project closeout meeting for their first wildfire mitigation home.



C. [Board of Forestry & Fire Protection](#) Update

- i. Land Use Planning Program update
 - 1. Subdivision Review Program update
 - 1) Amador County
 - 2) Alpine County
 - 3) Shasta County
- ii. 14 CCR §1268.00 et seq Fire Risk Reduction Community List Proposed Amendments
 - 1. 2024 Fire Risk Reduction Community List, as mandated by PRC 4290.1 is “a list of local agencies located in a state responsibility area or a very high fire hazard severity zone... that meet best practices for local fire planning.” The list is developed and maintained by the Board, with the first iteration beginning July 1, 2022, and updated every two years thereafter.
- iii. Report on Board’s Advisory Committees
 - 1. California Forest Pest Council

3. OLD BUSINESS

- i. Wildfire and Land Use Planning Charter Discussion Follow-Up - The draft charter was distributed and the floor was opened for discussion/comments. The goals for the day were to establish the Chair and Vice Chair of the committee and committee members. It was decided that WMAC members should email [Frank Bigelow](#) with names. Michael McGuire volunteered to help lead the effort in any way necessary. It’s possible that other entities (not sitting on WMAC) may have an interest and that will be considered moving forward. Frank Bigelow to resend the charter to J. Lopez
- j. Committee member names and proposed Chair/Vice Chair will be brought to the next meeting for action

4. PRESENTATIONS

- A. County Coordinator Program, California Fire Safe Council

5. ROUNDTABLE

Daniel Berlant

- A. Anale Burlew, CAL FIRE – Since June 16 of this year we’ve had 15 incident management teams deployed to fires across the state. At least one, if not up to 4, teams deployed at a time during that time period. We have supported fires up in Oregon per an agreement with the Oregon State Dept. of Forestry. We’ve been able to send resources up there to assist with their fire season. It’s been very impactful in all of the northwest. We were able to see a lot of good cases from the Park Fire fuel treatments effectiveness reports to highlight the good work and effects of those fuel treatments on fires. We are continuing to see that as fires continue to burn. Though it was not our fuel treatment, there was a major fuel treatment project where the Bridge Fire was burning and it’s really crediting being able to affect that community. If you have not had an opportunity to look at our CAL FIRE Incident Page, we have adjusted the incident maps to see the terrain where fires are burning.

- B. Brian Newman Lindsay, Department of Conservation – We’re seeing some of the larger landscape-scale projects that are in progress affected by the fires. Need to narrow the timeline between identifying the projects to actually getting them off the ground so we don’t spend 2 years of site planning and then having them burn down.
- C. Caroline Thomas Jacobs, Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety – we’re doing updates to the current 2023-25 WMP base year plan for utilities are being done in two groups this year. Group one, the three majors in Bear Valley – first drafts have been out and comments have been received. On schedule to release guidelines on the next 3-year base plan in October. Utilities will be submitting next year, in 2025, for the 2026-28 time period. If you’re interested in providing input on those guidelines please send them to [Caroline Thomas Jacobs](#) before October. We have recently released the second round of draft guidelines for the new 10-year distribution undergrounding plans which utilities are now authorized to be able to submit to us (by choice). Those are currently out for comment now. If you’re interested in commenting, now would be the time.
- Most recent version of the draft Electrical Undergrounding Plan Guidelines:
 - [Cover letter](#)
 - [Draft Guidelines \(clean\), including appendices](#)
 - Sign up to the service list to be notified of additions to the docket for the Undergrounding Guidelines [here](#)
 - See the 2026-2028 WMP Guidelines when they come out in October. Sign up to this service list [here](#):
- D. J. Lopez, State Board of Forestry & Fire Protection – his home will be used as an example of a wildfire retrofitted home on September 27, 2024, 3-5pm. Details TBD
- E. Robert Troy, CalOES – CalOES is working diligently every day to determine what federal assistance might be available for the recent fires. FEMA is still under immediate needs funding only.
- F. Deborah Halberstadt, Insurance Commissioner’s Office – today we held a public hearing on the draft regulations associated with catastrophe modeling and with providing insurance in wildfire distressed areas. If you have public comments (in writing) please send those to Deborah. This is a huge piece of the commissioner’s sustainable insurance strategy. We have been ticking off all of the pieces of the strategy for the past several months and this is a really big chunk of that.
- G. Michael McGuire, State Planning & Research – Round 1 awards for the regional resilience grant program awarded \$25M to 16 applicants, some of which are located in wildfire-prone areas.
- H. Clay Kerchof, Department of Housing and Community Development – on July 31, the Governor issued an executive order on infill housing developments. To the extent that this group is thinking about land use and what safer housing looks like, the all-government approach to facilitating infill housing within existing developed areas has these resilience co-benefits. This executive order very much does pertain to land use.
- I. Sophia Lemmo, California Association of Resource Conservation Districts - [CARC's Annual Conference](#) is scheduled for December 10-12, 2024 in Sacramento.
- J. Catherine Freeman, California State Association of Counties – Heard the call last week for Neutral Aid and put it out to all counties in a number of different manners. Northern California counties are already providing lots of aid, so hopefully everyone is getting what they need.
- K. Lisa Lien-Mager, California Natural Resources Agency – We are in the final internal review stages for the Annual Report so hopefully it will be out soon.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

Daniel Berlant

- A. There was no public comment.

7. UPCOMING MEETING DATE FOR 2024

Daniel Berlant

- A. October 15, 2024
715 P Street, 2nd Floor, 2-221 (A/B)
Sacramento, CA 95814

- B. November 19, 2024

This meeting will be held in San Diego along with a media event around the first hardened home in the area, if the majority of WMAC members are able to travel. If not, the meeting will be rescheduled to another date in November. **Please let Carrie Lewis know if you will be able to attend a San Diego meeting in-person.**

8. MEETING ADJOURNED 3:05 PM

Daniel Berlant



Wildfire Mitigation Advisory Committee – Land Use Planning Workgroup Charter

PURPOSE

The Land Use Planning Workgroup will provide a means of communication between the Wildfire Mitigation Advisory Committee and CAL FIRE-Office of the State Fire Marshal, representatives of industry, state agencies, the fire service, and other partners including tribal representatives. The Committee will provide a forum for addressing wildfire preparedness and mitigation issues of statewide concern related to land use planning, share best practices, seek comments and specific input on programs and technical issues.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Workgroup is being formed to act in an advisory capacity to the Wildfire Mitigation Advisory Committee on the issues facing the state related to Land use Planning with an initial focus on Accessory Dwelling Units and how it effects housing density.

Goal:

Deliver a written report to provide inform CAL FIRE, in consultation with the State Fire Marshal, to make recommendations on Land use Planning for a community and neighborhood development within the local responsibility area or state responsibility area through the input of mitigating factors.

Objectives:

- Provide a consistent and regular means of communication on topics related to Land use Planning with an initial focus on Accessory Dwelling Units and the effects on housing density by engaging representatives of relevant industries, state agencies, fire service agencies, and other partners
- Provide a forum for addressing wildfire preparedness and mitigation issues of statewide concern related to communities both existing and planned
- Share latest available research and best practices regarding community fire preparedness and mitigation efforts and how it effects long-term adaptation
- Seek and provide comments and specific input on proposed programs, that could inform local agencies and the public of applicable new laws and regulations
- Identify barriers in determining wildfire risk to communities



WILDFIRE MITIGATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Members of the Workgroup are to be determined.

Other partners interested in participating.

- PG&E

The State Fire Marshal may decide to add any other appropriate partners, including representatives from local governmental agencies.

The members of the Workgroup shall serve without compensation, but each member shall be reimbursed for their actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.

MEETINGS

- Schedule



WILDFIRE MITIGATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- The Workgroup shall meet on the first Tuesday of each month. If the meeting lands on a holiday, the Workgroup shall postpone and meet on the subsequent Tuesday.
- Location
 - Meetings shall be regularly scheduled in Sacramento
 - Meetings may be scheduled throughout the state on an as-needed basis
- Meetings will not be cancelled without cause

In order to ensure consistency and transparency, the following Roberts Rules of Order shall be adhered to:

- An approved published agenda,
- Meeting minutes,
- A quorum,
- Motions and seconds, and
- Voting requirements (including requests for roll call voting).

Rules for recognition and timelines for debate will be suspended unless specifically enacted by the membership.

Meetings may be rescheduled if the Workgroup is unable to meet a quorum.

A motion will be passed by a simple majority of the entire voting membership.

All members, voting and non-voting, may submit informational, discussion, and/or action items for the agenda prior to the meeting. Agenda items will take precedent and non-agenda items may be transacted upon if time permits.

WORKGROUP PROTOCOL

- The Workgroup shall comply with Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act
- Only items listed on the published agenda as "Motion Required" may be acted upon
- The Workgroup chair has the authority to set time limits on any agenda item

PROCESS

- The Community Wildfire Preparedness and Mitigation Division will provide administrative support to the Workgroup
- Agenda items should be submitted to the Workgroup coordinator four weeks before the scheduled meeting date
- Minutes will be taken at each meeting that capture the essence and actions of the meeting



WILDFIRE MITIGATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- Draft minutes will be posted on the Office of the State Fire Marshal website for review by the Workgroup and other interested parties
- After approval at the next meeting, final minutes will be posted on the Office of the State Fire Marshal website

QUORUM

A simple majority (50% plus 1) of the Workgroup membership shall be a quorum.

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CHAIR

- Interpretation and decisions are the purview of the chair

DRAFT