
WILDFIRE MITIGATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Meeting Minutes – Tuesday, July 21, 2026



Committee Members Present

Daniel Berlant, CAL FIRE, Office of the State Fire Marshal
Bob Counts, CAL FIRE
Tony Marino, Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety
Robyn Fennig, Office of Emergency Services
Jacy Hyde, California Fire Safe Council
Michael McGuire, Office of Land Use & Climate Innovation
Roy Wright, Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety
Nick Cammarota, California Building Industry Association (virtual)
Lenya Quinn-Davidson, University of California Cooperative (virtual)
Yana Valachovic, California Fire Science Consortium (virtual)
Tristan Lanza, Department of Housing & Community Development (virtual)
Sean McGlynn, League of California Cities (virtual)
Jordan Wells, California State Association of Counties (virtual)
Don Hankins, Tribal Government Representative (virtual)
Lisa Lien-Mager, California Natural Resources Agency

Members Absent

Brian Newman Lindsay, Department of Conservation
J. Lopez, State Board of Forestry & Fire Protection
Deborah Halberstadt, Insurance Commissioner's Office
Staci Heaton, Rural County Representatives of California
Bill Villarino, Santa Barbara County Fire
Sophia Lemmo, California Association of Resource Conservation Districts

CAL FIRE Staff in Attendance

Frank Bigelow, Deputy Director
John Morgan, Assistant Deputy Director
Jamie Sammut, Senior Staff Council
Matt Damon, Staff Chief
Mike Wink, Staff Chief
Heather McCulley, Deputy Chief
Emily Smith, Staff Chief
Gene Potkey, Assistant Chief
Richard Brechbuehl, Deputy Chief
Chris Ramey, Deputy Chief (virtual)
Shaun Fairbanks, Deputy Chief
Randy Northup, Assistant Chief
Spencer Mallinger, Battalion Chief (virtual)
Jennifer Renner, Battalion Chief (virtual)
Kara Garrett, Deputy State Fire Marshal III (virtual)
Justine Grafton, Analyst II
Carrie Lewis, Analyst II
Danh Dao, Analyst I

1. CALL TO ORDER 1:00 PM

A. Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 PM by Frank Bigelow.

Frank Bigelow

B. Roll Call – Carrie Lewis

A quorum was not established with 8 committee members present in-person and 7 attending virtually.

C. Approval of the June 19, 2026, meeting minutes (Motion Required) – Frank Bigelow

The June 19, 2026, meeting minutes were not approved as there was not a quorum.

D. Approval of the July 21, 2026, meeting agenda (Motion Required) – Frank Bigelow

The July 21, 2026, meeting agenda was not approved as there was not a quorum.

2. UPDATES

A. Division Report

i. Wildfire Preparedness

1. Defensible Space

1) Statewide SRA inspection counts

- i. Fiscal year totals are under audit to ensure accuracy for final reporting. The final numbers will be released in August.

2) Qualified Entity interest continues across the state

- i. 13 classes taught to date, adding 262 defensible space assessors
- ii. 11 requests for classes are in coordination

3) Model Defensible Space

- i. Year-to-date platform requests from 4 cities
- ii. CAL FIRE training videos on platforms use is being linked to the application

2. Home Hardening

- 1) Supporting the California Wildfire Mitigation Program by advancing scalable home hardening and defensible space retrofits efforts that reduce community wildfire risk.

- 2) Coordinating with CalOES to define staffing needs that will effectively support the Prop 4 Grant Program's statewide expansion of defensible space and home hardening retrofits projects.

3. Burn Permits

- 1) Requests for burn permits are low this time of year due to restricted burning for fire season precautions.

2) Year-to-date:

- i. Residential permits – 59,491
- ii. Cultural permits - 843

3) 2026-27 fiscal year-to-date total:

- i. Residential burn permit – 134
- ii. Cultural Burn Permits: 7

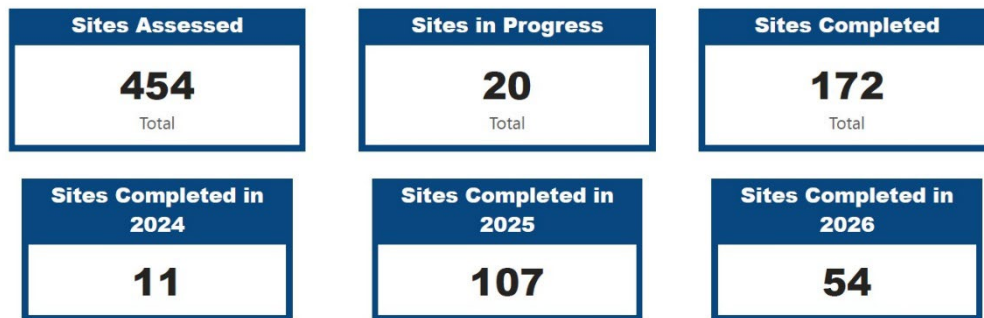
4. Utility Wildfire Mitigation Program

- 1) Completed last powerline equipment and Public Resource Code 4292 and 4293 training for CAL FIRE Defensible Space Inspectors on July 15.

- 2) Wildfire Mitigation Plan guideline updates are continuing through review process with Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety.
- i. Wildfire Planning and Statistics – [Fuels Reduction | CAL FIRE](#)
Fire Prevention Efforts FY 25/26
 1. Fuel Reduction Projects
 - 1) 843 projects, 168.6% of the goal
 2. Combined Fuel Reduction
 - 1) 119,874 acres treated, 119.9% of the goal
 - i. Unit Projects – 62,617.8 acres
 - a) Northern Region: 31,019.7 acres
 - b) Southern Region: 31,598.1 acres
 - 2) Grant Projects: 52,560.7 acres
 - 3) CFIP Projects: 4,695.4 acres
 3. Prescribed Fire (also counted in fuel reduction)
 - 1) 46,548.7 acres treated, 93.1% of the goal
 4. Wildland Fuels
 - 1) CalMAPPER V4 went live on Monday, July 13. CalMAPPER V4 will bring and modern approach to data collection for field resources and staff.
 - 2) Some enhancements include:
 - i. Mobile data entry
 - ii. Activity level detail
 - iii. Common user interface
 5. Pre-Fire Planning
 - 1) 2026 Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) timeline has been adjusted to meet regulatory requirements. Anticipated public hearings in September 2026.
 - 2) Vibrant Planet Platform (VPP): July 20 marks the first of 3 deployment phases, which include SHU, HUU, MEU, TCU, SLU, TUU, and SBC. Training will be provided over a course of 8 weeks.
 - 3) 2026 Fuels Treatment Effectiveness Reporting (FTER) stats: 13 positive impacts, 5 awaiting Unit Chief approval.
 6. CalStats
 - 1) CAL FIRE introduced a new Records Management System (RMS) for our over 630K annual calls for service. The First Due implementation successfully went live on July 1.
- ii. Community Wildfire Mitigation Assistance
 1. Community Wildfire Mitigation Assistance Program (CWMAP), Formerly Land Use Planning
 - 1) Safety Elements Assessments
 - i. 14 SEs in the Informal Review process.
 - ii. 5 SEs on the agenda for review at RPC – cities of Placerville, Monte Sereno, Corona, Lake Forest, and the County of Madera.
 - 2) Subdivision Review – Fire Safety Surveys
 - i. LNU, TCU, and SLU in 5-year review process.
 - ii. Active engagement with nearly all jurisdictions due for review in 2026.

2. Intro to [Land Use Planning for Wildfire](#)
 - 1) Staff are working with the Community Wildfire Planning Center on funding and plans for the next round of classes – stay tuned!
3. National Fire Protection Association, Firewise USA
 - 1) Currently 1,695 communities in good standing
 - i. More applications in the queue
4. [Wildfire Prevention Grants Program](#)
 - 1) Solicitation closed July 8, 2026
 - 2) \$70 million in grant funding for community-focused wildfire prevention and resilience projects.
 - i. Funding via Proposition 4 California Climate Bond
 - ii. Eligible projects include: hazardous fuel reduction, wildfire education and planning
 - 3) Preliminary figures are 346 applications submitted for over \$236 million (figures are subject to change as applications are processed).

B. California Wildfire Mitigation Program Update (as of July 17, 2026)



3. NEW BUSINESS

- A. No new business

4. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Neighborhood Wildfire Mitigation Validation Program Workgroup
 This workgroup is engaged in monthly discussions to build out the framework that will be a tiered system with solidified standards going through parcel and neighborhood level mitigation. There will be a more detailed discussion at the next meeting.
- B. Land Use Planning Workgroup
 The last meeting was held in June with a presentation and discussion on the Incline Village HOA and their work to reduce insurance premiums through neighborhood risk reduction measures. The discussion was led by Andrew Engler, the CEO at Rock Rose Risk. Today we will discuss the draft toolkit that was developed last year and reflect on prior workgroup presentations and discuss potential deliverables moving forward. We essentially function as a very informative knowledge exchange but today we will discuss how we want to use that information moving forward. We hope to aggregate the information and develop recommendations for this committee to consider at a later meeting this year.

4. PRESENTATIONS

- A. Utility Wildfire Resilience Partnership Program Overview – Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety
- B. What Are We Missing When Engaging Homeowners in Wildfire Mitigation? - CSAA

5. ROUNDTABLE

- A. **Robert Troy** – Secured a one year extension for individual assistance for LA buyers. 12 months for homeowners and 3 months for renters. It's not just rental insurance that homeowners are eligible for, but also for repair, reconstruction, personal property replacement, etc. So people get their final insurance settlements but there's still assistance available and we encourage people to go back to FEMA – they have to go back and make a request. We are supporting, via technical assistance, the Boyle Heights fire and potentially supporting the mutual aid request for the Colorado fires as well.
- B. **Frank Bigelow** – With her promotion, Robyn Fennig will now be the new representative for CalOES.
- C. **Robyn Fennig** – We are watching what will happen with FEMA leadership. The Region 9 Administrator is serving as the acting FEMA Administrator and will eventually be replaced by who we are hoping will be Cameron Hamilton. It will be interesting to see what FEMA looks like under a formal leadership.
- D. **Michael Maguire** – Announcing the early bird registration for the inaugural [Brazilian/California Summit](#) that LCI is hosting in October. The reduced rates are available for registration through August 21. There is a call for proposals for any displays, poster sessions, or breakout session that any agency, nonprofit, or academia would like to present. You can also reach out to Michael Maguire.
- E. **Jacy Hyde** – Making a lot of progress on county coordinators and the appropriation form from last year, has been signed. That money will start going to the coordinators to extend the program for another year along with some new tools and resources that were developed to help them be more effective with data collection and communications. Also, going to conclude the legislative push in the next 6 weeks or so on codifying the County Coordinator Program through SB 973 which is a bill we've co-sponsored with Mega Fire Action and would put the program into statute as well as create some new risk modeling tools that can be used locally.
- F. **Bob Counts** – Fire season is well underway in California, but the fires have been relatively small, typically within the first burn period. This is giving us the opportunity to help a few of our state partners. We sent 3 strike teams of fire engines to Colorado to assist there and in the last couple days sent 2 strike teams of fire engines, 2 strike teams of bulldozers and about 15 various overhead to Oregon. The fourth of seven C130s is coming online in late August in Pasa Robles. The third came online about a month ago in San Diego.
- G. **Frank Bigelow** – The 5-year average for the number of fires in the State of California is just a few under 5,000. We are at 3,750. The number of fires doesn't really tell the story, the number of acres burned in the 5-year average is 230,000 year-to-date from January 1 to now and this year we're at 144,000. The crews have been able to keep the fires relatively small within the first burn period.
- H. **Roy Wright** – A tremendous amount of research going on in the vegetation space, and the way we're watching various kinds of vegetation from up against structures to support both building code work as well as retrofits. There's been a lot of work with community groups in Southern California during the rebuild. There have been a couple big announcements about the elements that are in the Wildfire Prepared Neighborhood. There are now about 46 developments in progress and we're moving from these developments that have 4-5 dozen layers of announcements to where there are about 500-700 homes at a time in terms of commitments that are being made.

- I. **Don Hankins** – The Indigenous Stewardship Network is getting ready for our convening that will take place August 19-21 in the CNRA building. You can get more information [here](#).
- J. **Lenya Quinn-Davidson** – The [Beneficial Fire Summit](#) in collaboration with the Association for Fire Ecology and other partners, will be held December 7-11 in San Diego. The call for proposals is open now for sessions, workshops, or presentations. If that's of interest feel free to submit something.
- K. **Yana Valachovic** – The Zone Zero Regulatory Development has made it out of the committee and is now before the full Board. It will then come up for discussion on Thursday at the Board of Forestry meeting which is currently a multi-day meeting and underway. It's anticipated there will be a robust conversation at the August meeting and potentially a vote on August 19.
- L. **Sean McGlynn** – On the way to Chicago to attend the Resilient America Summit with the resiliency company and talk about the first Wildfire Prepared Neighborhood.
- M. **Frank Bigelow for Lisa Lien Mager** – There were 464 wildfire safety projects approved through the expedited SOE process. There is legislation that would codify that process working its way through the legislature to make sure that fast tracking the ability to get fuels work done on the ground.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

- A. There was no public comment.

7. UPCOMING MEETING DATES FOR 2026

- A. August 21, 2026
Hyatt Regency, Garden Room
11999 Harbor Blvd.
Garden Grove, CA 92840

NRHQ Building, Room 2-201
715 P Street
Sacramento, CA

8. MEETING ADJOURNED 2:38 PM