
WILDFIRE MITIGATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Meeting Minutes – Tuesday, March 17, 2026



Committee Members Present

Daniel Berlant, CAL FIRE, Office of the State Fire Marshal
Anale Burlew, CAL FIRE
Brian Newman Lindsay, Department of Conservation (virtual)
Tony Marino, Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety
J. Lopez, State Board of Forestry & Fire Protection
Robert Troy, Office of Emergency Services
Deborah Halberstadt, Insurance Commissioner's Office
Michael McGuire, Office of Land Use & Climate Innovation (virtual)
Lara Buluc, California Fire Safe Council (virtual)
Steve Hawks, Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety
Todd Lando, Santa Barbara County Fire (virtual)
Chris Ochoa, California Building Industry Association (virtual)
Yana Valachovic, California Fire Science Consortium (virtual)
Clay Kerchof, Department of Housing & Community Development (virtual)
Staci Heaton, Rural County Representatives of California
Sierra Riker, California Association of Resource Conservation Districts (virtual)
Jordan Wells, California State Association of Counties
Don Hankins, Tribal Government Representative (virtual)

Members Absent

Lenya Quinn-Davidson, University of California Cooperative
Sean McGlynn, League of California Cities
Lisa Lien-Mager, California Natural Resources Agency

CAL FIRE Staff in Attendance

Frank Bigelow, Deputy Director
Vickie Sakamoto, Assistant State Fire Marshal
Andrew Henning, Assistant Deputy Director
John Morgan, Assistant Deputy Director
Christine McMorrow, Deputy Director
Jamie Sammut, Senior Staff Counsel (virtual)
Matt Damon, Staff Chief
Mike Morlan, Deputy Chief
Heather McCulley, Deputy Chief
Shaun Fairbanks, Deputy Chief
Shane Vargas, Deputy Chief
Mark Rosenberg, Research Data Manager (virtual)
Randy Northup, Assistant Chief
Gene Potkey, Assistant Chief
Jennifer Renner, Battalion Chief (virtual)
Jillian Fisher, Supervisor I
Carrie Lewis, Analyst II
Danh Dao, Analyst I

1. CALL TO ORDER 1:05 PM

Daniel Berlant

A. Welcome

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

B. Roll Call – Carrie Lewis

A quorum was not established with 9 committee members present in-person and 9 attending virtually.

C. Approval of the January 20, 2026, Meeting Minutes (Motion Required) – Daniel Berlant

The January 20, 2026, meeting minutes were not approved as there was not a quorum.

D. Approval of the February 17, 2026, Meeting Minutes (Motion Required) – Daniel Berlant

The February 17, 2026, meeting minutes were not approved as there was not a quorum.

E. Approval of the March 17, 2026, meeting agenda (Motion Required) – Daniel Berlant

The March 17, 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 total for fiscal year-to-date 2025-26:
 - i. 186,627 inspections, 75% of the goal (250,000)
- 2) Qualified Entity assessment year-to-date total for 2026:
 - i. 118 assessments
- 3) Schedule of Qualified Entity classes:
 - i. March 24-25, San Luis Obispo County
 - ii. April 21-22, Riverside County
 - iii. April 22-23, Orange County
- 4) Model Defensible Requests
 - i. Bakersfield F.D.
 - ii. Seaside F.D.
 - iii. Weed F.D.

2. Burn Permits

- 1) Residential burn permits will need to be renewed April 1, 2026
 - i. Emails will be sent to burn permit holders in incremental batches to not overload the system
- 2) 2025-26 fiscal year-to-date total: 50,922
 - i. Cultural Burn Permits: 900

3. Home Hardening

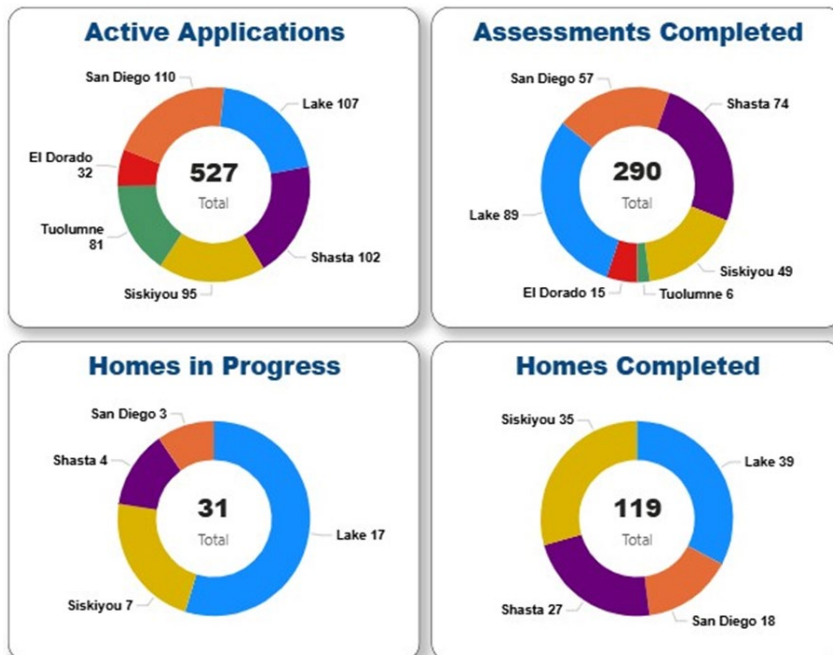
- 1) Conducted the CWMP 2025, Title 24, Part 7 training for the subrecipient communities.

- 2) Reviewed home hardening assessment reports, scope of work documents, and provided technical recommendations for retrofits.
 - 3) Conducted Part 7 overview training to Firewise USA Regional Coordinators and discussed home hardening retrofits recommendation.
4. Utility Wildfire Mitigation Program
 - 1) Working with OEIS on guidelines for 2027 WMPs for IOUs and ITOs.
 - 2) Utilities are currently in planning phases for upcoming PSPS exercises.
- i. Wildfire Planning and Statistics – [Fuels Reduction | CAL FIRE](#)
Fire Prevention Efforts FY 25/26
1. Fuel Reduction Projects
 - 1) 597 projects, 119.4% of the goal
 2. Combined Fuel Reduction
 - 1) 57,532.1 acres treated, 57.5% of the goal
 - i. Unit Projects – 27,063 acres
 - a) Northern Region: 19,052.4 acres
 - b) Southern Region: 8,010.6 acres
 - 2) Grant Projects: 27,255.9 acres
 - 3) CFIP Projects: 3,113.2 acres
 3. Prescribed Fire (also counted in fuel reduction)
 - 1) 15,527.1 acres treated, 31.1% of the goal
 4. Pre-Fire Planning
 - 1) Concluded Fire Plan Annual Workshop last week which was well attended by Unit and Region Pre-Fire Engineers.
 - 2) Coordinating with CA FSC County Coordinator Program to develop a statewide CWPP database and WPP planning web map.
 - 3) Vibrant Planet Platform (VPP) statewide deployment plan development. Setting up a VPP Technical Committee to support deployment and inform VPP enhancement/enabement needs.
 5. CalStats
 - 1) Modified the Fire Reports language in the 26/27 Contract County Annual Operating Plans (AOPs) to ensure alignment with NERIS reporting requirements.
 - 2) Coordinating with IT to integrate NERIS API data, including geospatial elements, into the Cal Stats database.
- ii. Community Wildfire Mitigation Assistance
1. Community Wildfire Mitigation Assistance Program (CWMAP), Formerly Land Use Planning
 - 1) Safety Elements
 - i. Currently 17 Ses in the Informational Review status
 - ii. Cities of Agoura Hills, Hollister, and Sonora were presented at RPC last week.
 - 2) Subdivision Review
 - i. Fire Safety Surveys for Jurupa Valley, Menifee, and San Jacinto presented at RPC last week.
 - ii. Newport Beach surveys completed with Chiefs Berlant and Gillespie, from Newport Beach, last week.

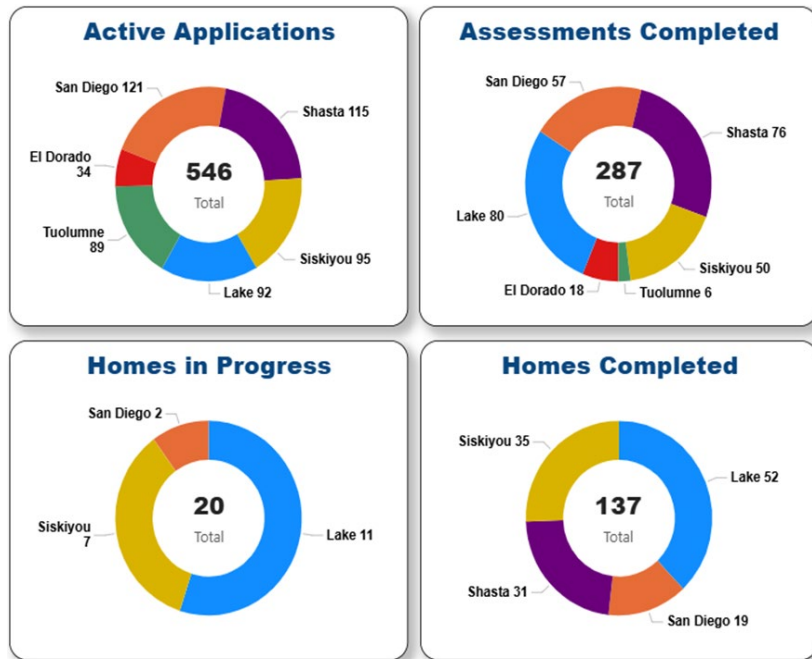
- iii. This finalized all surveys conducted in accordance with the 2007 FHSZ maps.
2. Intro to Land Use Planning for Wildfire
 - 1) Sign up now for classes this Spring:
 - i. Upcoming Classes
 - o May 12 – Tahoe City
 - o May 14 – Chico
 - 2) Sign-ups and more information on the [CWPM website](#) and at <https://communitywildfire.org/land-use-planning-for-wildfires-trainings-california/>
 3. National Fire Protection Association, Firewise USA
 - 1) Currently 1558 communities in good standing
 - i. Numerous applications under review
 - ii. The Woodfords Firewise Community in Alpine County is the 1500th Firewise community in California!
 - o Information on a celebration will be coming soon!
 4. [CWMA Statewide Clearinghouse Data Center](#)
 - 1) Documents from Wildfire Planning Class
 - 2) Forum to share useful information

B. California Wildfire Mitigation Program Update

i. February 17, 2026



ii. March 17, 2026



iii. Total Homes Completed by Year



iv. CWMPA-001019 Pergola Retrofit

- Charlie side – retrofit combustible pergola (ATT-PTR)
- Remove combustible trellis cladding on top of attached pergola withing 24 inches of wall surface
- Wrap entire ledger board with non-combustible material, caulk around retrofit to prevent ember intrusion
- Install 24-inch wide pre-painted, non-combustible corrugated panel retrofit
- Caulk pergola-to-wall intersection, counter flash as required
- Wrap the base of 3 posts a minimum of 6 inches vertically using fiber-cement board
- Fill or caulk areas in roof cover retrofit that could trap embers

Before
Photo



Pergola
Retrofit



Pergola
Retrofit,
cont.



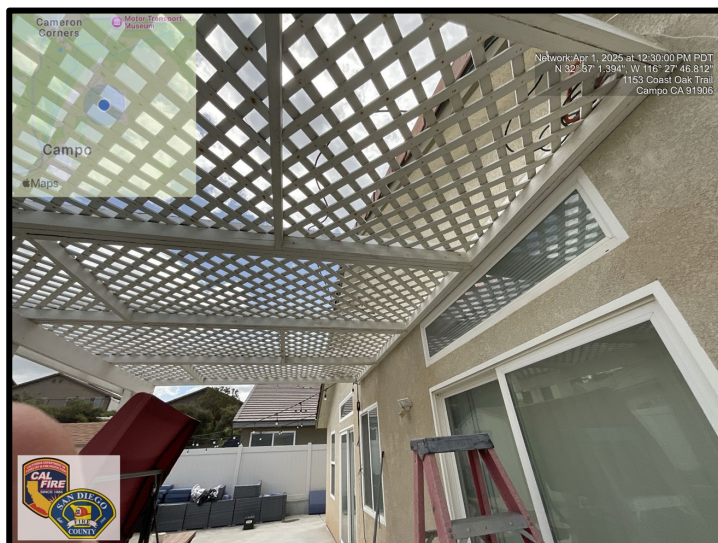
Pergola
Retrofit,
cont.



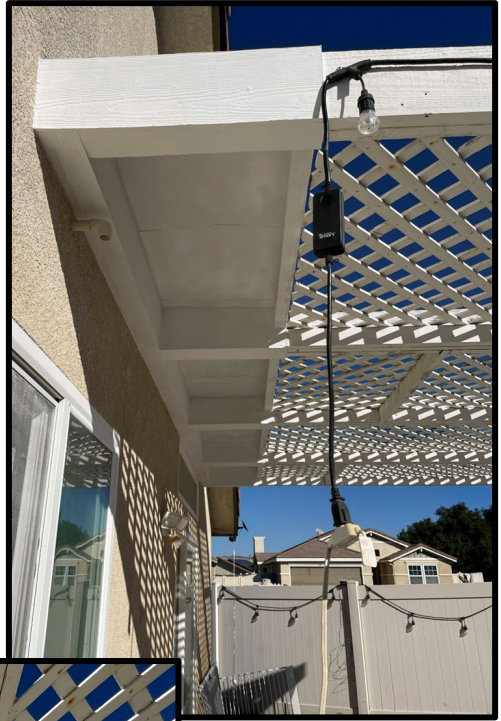
iv. CWMPA-001018 Pergola Retrofit

- A-1 attached pergola
- Charlie side – retrofit combustible pergola (ATT-PTR)
- Remove combustible trellis cladding on top of attached pergola within 24 inches of wall surface
- Wrap entire ledger board with non-combustible material, caulk around retrofit to prevent ember intrusion
- Install fire-treated joist at 24-inch center line to attach trellis and non-combustible retrofit
- Install 24-inch-side pre-painted, non-combustible corrugated panel retrofit
- Caulk pergola-to-wall intersection, counter flash as required
- Wrap the base of 3 posts a minimum of 6 inches vertically using fiber cement board
- Fill or caulk areas in roof cover retrofit that could trap embers

Before
CWMPA-
001018



After
Retrofit



After
Retrofit



Wrapped
Post with
Fiber
Cement
Board



3. MEMBER ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

- A. [Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety](#) – Tony Marino

4. PRESENTATIONS

- A. [The Danish Approach to Resilient Development](#) – Ailish Dunn, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, Royal Danish Consulate General; and Robin Urquhart, RDH Building Science
Ailish Dunn and Robin Urquhart highlighted the opportunity to leverage the new MoU between California and Denmark on climate resilience to support wildfire mitigation efforts in California. The MFA will present the Danish approach to resilient development, including Nordic experience with climate change and wildfire fuel reduction, as well as Danish strategies for resilient buildings, including insulation standards. RDH Building Science will follow with technical insights on home hardening strategies and practical measures for resilient structures in California.
- B. [Weber Creek](#) – Charlie Sidoti, InnSure
Charlie Sidoti presented results from work funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and supported by the California Dept of Insurance. The project explores ways to leverage community efforts such as home hardening, defensible space creation, and fuel reduction to ensure the risk reduction benefits are more quickly and fully reflected in insurance markets.

5. ROUNDTABLE

- A. Robert Troy – In terms of funding for the Department of Homeland Security, particularly FEMA, there is a policy in place that anything over \$100,000 must be approved by the DHS Secretary. Despite testimony last week, that policy is still in place and there are several billion dollars of grants on the Secretary's desk. There will likely be a new Secretary by the end of the month but that is still pending confirmation. This directly impacts a lot of the resilience projects in California and a lot of the direct reimbursement projects on the public assistance side as well. Under the DHS shutdown, which is just a little over a month, there have been different impacts than have been seen in the past. FEMA staff were paid out of the disaster relief fund and worked regardless of the shutdown. This time they've been providing guidance to FEMA employees to either not work even though they're being paid, or even if they do work, to not interact with state or local jurisdictions, to not respond to requests for information or answer questions. Some work is getting done but we are seeing negative impacts from the current stance from the administration.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

- A. There was no public comment

7. UPCOMING MEETING DATES FOR 2026

- A. April 28, 2026
Natural Resources Headquarters Building, Room 2-302 A/B
715 P Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

8. MEETING ADJOURNED 2:56 PM