

---

# **WILDFIRE MITIGATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

## ***Meeting Minutes – Tuesday, May 19, 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  
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  
Roy Wright, Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety  
Chris Ochoa, California Building Industry Association (virtual)  
Lenya Quinn-Davidson, University of California Cooperative (virtual)  
Tristan Lanza, Department of Housing & Community Development (virtual)  
Staci Heaton, Rural County Representatives of California  
Sean McGlynn, League of California Cities  
Jordan Wells, California State Association of Counties  
Don Hankins, Tribal Government Representative (virtual)  
Lisa Lien-Mager, California Natural Resources Agency

### **Members Absent**

Brian Newman Lindsay, Department of Conservation  
Jacy Hyde, California Fire Safe Council  
Yana Valachovic, California Fire Science Consortium  
Todd Lando, Santa Barbara County Fire  
Sierra Riker, California Association of Resource Conservation Districts

### **CAL FIRE Staff in Attendance**

Frank Bigelow, Deputy Director  
Andrew Henning, Assistant Deputy Director  
Mike Wink, Staff Chief  
Bryan Carter, Staff Chief  
Heather McCulley, Deputy Chief  
Mike Morlan, Deputy Chief  
Emily Smith, Staff Chief  
Gene Potkey, Assistant Chief  
Rudy Baltazar, Division Chief  
Richard Brechbuehl, Deputy Chief (virtual)  
Chris Ramey, Deputy Chief  
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 1:05 PM**

#### **A. Welcome**

The meeting was called to order at 1:02 PM by Daniel Berlant.

**Daniel Berlant**

B. Roll Call – Carrie Lewis  
A quorum was not established with 13 committee members present in-person and 4 attending virtually.

- C. Approval of past Meeting Minutes (**Motion Required**) – **Daniel Berlant**
- i. January 20, 2026
  - ii. February 17, 2026
  - iii. March 17, 2026

<b>Motion:</b>	Sean McGlynn moved to accept the January 20, February 17, and March 17, 2026 meeting minutes; J. Lopez seconded the motion.
<b>Action:</b>	All members voted unanimously to approve the motion.

- D. Approval of the April 28, 2026, meeting agenda (**Motion Required**) – **Daniel Berlant**

<b>Motion:</b>	Robert Troy moved to accept the April 28, 2026 meeting agenda; Steve Hawks seconded the motion.
<b>Action:</b>	All members voted unanimously to approve the motion.

## 2. UPDATES

### A. Division Report

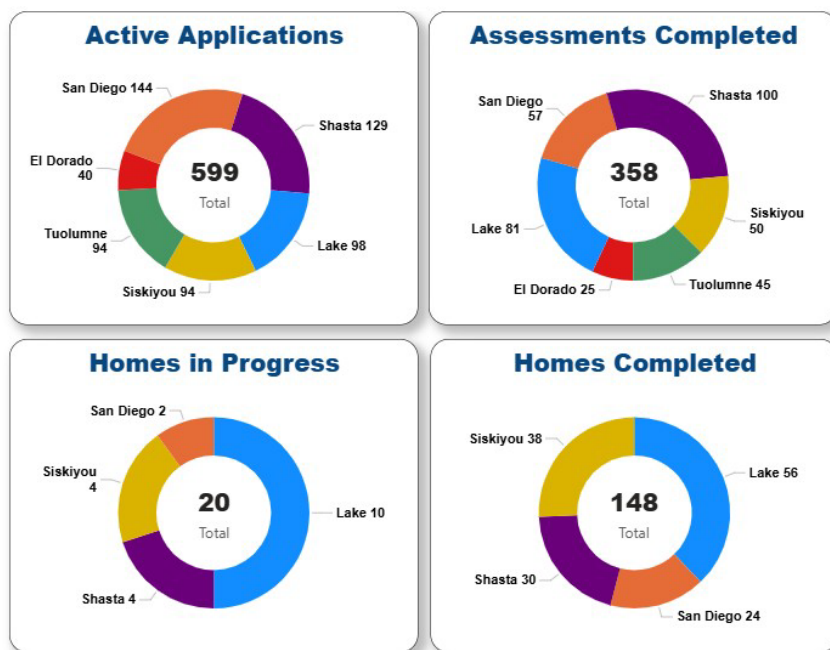
- i. Wildfire Preparedness
  - 1. Defensible Space
    - 1) Statewide SRA total for fiscal year-to-date 2025-26:
      - i. 243,556 inspections, 97% of the goal (250,000)
    - 2) Qualified Entity assessment year-to-date total for 2026:
      - i. 204 assessments
    - 3) Qualified Entity class interest continues to grow with the next class being hosted by the Plumas Fire Safe Council in Quincy June 12-13
  - 2. Burn Permits
    - 1) New permit submittals are off to a great start
    - 2) Year-to-date:
      - i. Residential permits – 51, 412
      - ii. Cultural permits - 734
    - 3) 2025-26 fiscal year-to-date total:
      - i. Residential burn permit – 90,491
      - ii. Cultural Burn Permits: 1,414
  - 3. Utility Wildfire Mitigation Program
    - 1) Updating Wildfire Mitigation Plan guidelines with the Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety for investor-owner utility and independent transmission operators.
    - 2) Southern California Edison is currently in the planning stages for a Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) training exercise that will be held on June 3.
- i. Wildfire Planning and Statistics – [Fuels Reduction | CAL FIRE](#)  
Fire Prevention Efforts FY 25/26
  - 1. Fuel Reduction Projects

- 1) 708 projects, 141.6% of the goal
  2. Combined Fuel Reduction
    - 1) 75,141.7 acres treated, 75.1% of the goal
      - i. Unit Projects – 33,277.8 acres
        - a) Northern Region: 23,917.8 acres
        - b) Southern Region: 9,360.6 acres
      - 2) Grant Projects: 37,754.9 acres
      - 3) CFIP Projects: 4,109 acres
  3. Prescribed Fire (also counted in fuel reduction)
    - 1) 19,450.2 acres treated, 38.9% of the goal
  4. Wildland Fuels
    - 1) Continuing to work with Techynsilva on the anticipated release of CalMAPPER V4 on July 13.
    - 2) Completed CalMAPPER V4 training last week with the Grants Program.
    - 3) Additional CalMAPPER V4 training for field users to be held in June.
    - 4) 2026 SRA Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) map update with 5-year SRA Review changes in 34 counties starting in June 2026.
  5. Pre-Fire Planning
    - 1) CAL FIRE signed a contract with Vibrant Planet Platform (VPP). Implementation to units and contract counties starts in June.
    - 2) Fuels Treatment Effectiveness Reports (FTER) is underway as we enter peak season.
    - 3) 2025 Unit Fire Plan has been submitted for review at the Region level.
  6. CalStats
    - 1) CAL FIRE signed a contract with First Due – Records Management System. Training and implementation to units starts in June.
    - 2) The 2025 Redbook has been finalized, approved and posted to our website and is available [here](#).
- ii. Community Wildfire Mitigation Assistance
1. Community Wildfire Mitigation Assistance Program (CWMAP), Formerly Land Use Planning
    - 1) New Jurisdiction Engagement
      - i. Staff working statewide with communities new to having FHSZ areas.
    - 2) Safety Elements
      - i. There are currently two cities in the formal review process (Oceanside and Burlingame)
      - ii. 15 jurisdictions in the Information Review Status
    - 3) Fire Safety Surveys
      - i. 22 jurisdictions due for revisits in 2026.
    - 4) Program staff participated in the 2028 SHMP kick off meeting last week.
  2. Intro to Land Use Planning for Wildfire
    - 1) Final trainings for this year held last week:
      - i. This cycle:
        - a) 10 in-person trainings from Oct. 2025 – May 2026
        - b) ~300 attendees + CWMAP staff training

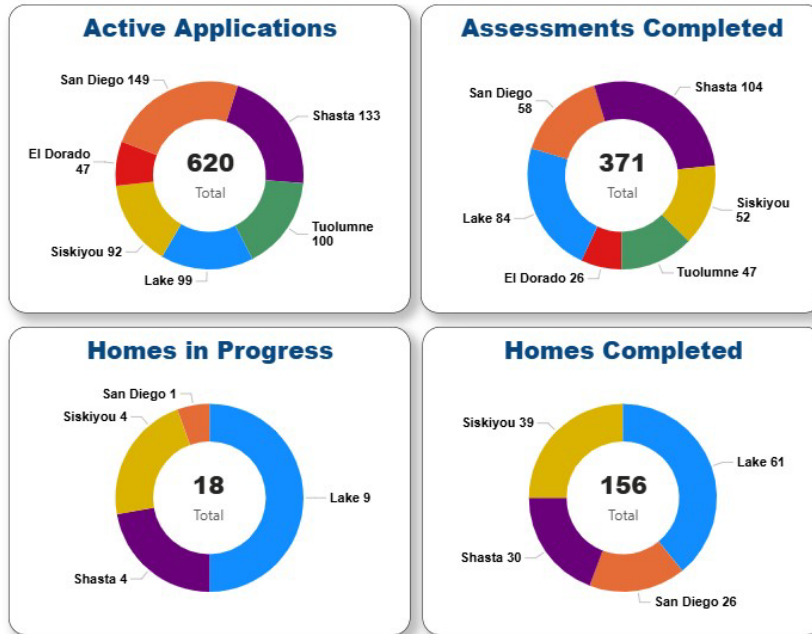
- ii. Overall since 2022
  - a) Combined total of 35 trainings
  - b) ~1000 attendees!
- 2) Other highlights
  - i. Completion of multiple internal trainings for CAL FIRE staff.
  - ii. Approval of CM credits by APA California for eligible planners.
  - iii. Recipient of the 2025 APA National Planning Award for resilience and sustainability.
  - iv. Acceptance of a session proposal to the APA California 2026 Annual Planning Conference.
- 3. National Fire Protection Association, Firewise USA
  - 1) Currently 1,633 communities in good standing
    - i. Numerous applications under review
    - ii. The Woodfords Firewise Community in Alpine County is the 1500<sup>th</sup> Firewise community in California!
      - a) Recognition on May 19 in Markleeville!
- 4. [Wildfire Prevention Grants Program](#)
  - 1) Solicitation opened May 7, 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) Completed applications must be submitted by 3:00pm on July 8, 2026.

B. California Wildfire Mitigation Program Update

i. April 24, 2026



ii. May 19, 2026



iii. Total Homes Completed by Year



iv. California Wildfire Mitigation Pilot Program (CWMP)

1. The CWMP was established as a pilot program to evaluate effective methods for reducing wildfire risk at the neighborhood and community scale. Unlike programs focused on single retrofit measures, the CWMP was designed as a comprehensive framework integrating home hardening, defensible space, vegetation management, and broader community-level risk reduction strategies.
  - a. First of its kind
  - b. From the ground up
2. The central objective of the program is to develop a scalable evidence-based model that communities across California can replicate to implement locally tailored wildfire mitigation efforts with state support.
3. To advance this goal:
  - a. The CWMP developed an interactive assessment application and the Minimum Quality Standards (MQS) that establish consistent retrofit and defensible space requirements grounded in wildfire science, building codes, and ignition-resistant construction best practices.

4. The program emphasizes site-specific implementation through comprehensive home assessments, development of Statements of Work (SOWs), and identification of mitigation measures tailored to each property's wildfire exposure and vulnerabilities.
  - a. Fulfills Assembly Bill (AB) 38's fact-finding directive by testing, measuring, and standardizing what works, using detailed onsite assessments and CWMP MQS 2.1 to deliver the highest risk reduction per dollar specific to each property based on the immediate adjacent hazard.



### 3. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Neighborhood Wildfire Mitigation Validation Program Workgroup  
Starting the program with parcel and density levels with the goal of home hardening, hazard mitigation, and IDHS being the gold standard to hit every one of those things. The next meeting is scheduled for June 8.
- B. Land Use Planning Workgroup  
The last meeting was held in March with a presentation and discussion on the Fire Hazard TA with Erik de Kok from Ascent Environmental. There will be a meeting today with a presentation by Mike Peterson with the California Department of Insurance providing an overview of a recent study by CDI which shows rebuilding Los Angeles to wildfire standards could slash future fire losses.

### 4. PRESENTATIONS

- A. [Community Wildfire Risk Reduction Program Framework](#) – Steve Hawks, IBHS; Karen Collins and Nicole Ganely, APCIA
- B. [State Responsibility Area, Fire Hazard Severity Zones Map Update](#) – Emily Smith, CAL FIRE

## 5. ROUNDTABLE

- A. Tony Marino – Michael Kaser is the new Director of the Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety who comes from the Public Utilities Commission, so he is very familiar with the energy landscape and utilities. The 0–5-foot zone continues, with a workshop in Los Angeles County on April 23, a town hall in Councilmember Palosa’s district. The Board chair stated that his intention is not to present in July but to wait for full approval at the August meeting for the 0-5 result.
- B. Deborah Halberstadt – There’s a collaboration between HCD, Transfer Good, and CDI to look at community recovery and resilience post-disaster. HCD received community development block grant disaster recovery funds, some of which are allocated for looking at innovations in insurance in specific counties that were affected by the 2023 floods. There will be a webinar on June 1, open to the public, to learn more about what that project is going to entail in terms of working with specific communities within those former subjective counties. They will be thinking through the physical and economic resilience that can build up pre-disaster and then recovery.
- C. Robert Troy – The state submitted a request, regarding the LA fires, to extend the period of assistance for survivors for the FEMA individual assistance program. It is currently set to expire on July 8 but are hopeful of getting an extension. The length of time required to rebuild after fire is significantly longer than repairing your home after a flood. The new fire season is well under way, and everyone is tracking the recent fires including Santa Rosa Island and the Sandy Fire. We are happy to report that the OES Director requested and received a Fire Management Assistance grant for the Sandy Fire. That will help to pay for the immediate firefighter cost and emergency measures taken. The FEMA Review council met on May 7 and issued its [final report](#) with a public comment period until June 8.
- D. Bob Counts – Fire season is underway in Southern California with multiple fires in Riverside and San Diego, so fire season preparations are ongoing. All of the seasonal staff are back full-time. All of the fire engines and dozers are fully staffed and 134 of the 136 hand crews are staffed and recently completed their preseason learning instruments. Aircraft availability is still ramping up for the season. The southern region is almost fully staffed, and the northern region is steadily coming online as aircraft are coming out of their winter maintenance schedules. Three of the seven C-130 air tankers are in service and numbers four and five will be completed in the next few months and their tank conversions are completed.
- E. Steve Hawks – In terms of the structural fire visit, there were about 40 people in attendance from eight different states including the EDU research firm with four panel discussions including code development.
- F. Michael Maguire – Working on an earthen building materials research project with the Elite P Working Group and were able to secure \$250,000 from the agency budget to dedicate to a research project in partnership with the University of California, Berkeley Disaster Lab. Everyone is invited to collaborate as the scope of work is further refined as we really want the project to be not only useful from a land use planning perspective but also for CalOES, CAL FIRE and other outward agencies.
- G. Lisa Lien Mager – There was a secretary speaker series today highlighting what the problem is for wildfire as we get into peak year 2026. They discussed conditions and preparedness efforts. Also working to implement actions under the Governor’s executive order on beneficial fire and have circulated the progress on the actions that have been taken.
- H. Jordan Wells – Hosting their legislative conference this week highlighting wildfire. There will be speakers from this room and a booth educating members on the CalREC vision.
- I. Lenya Quinn-Davidson – Hosting a webinar on Thursday focused on fire information and some interesting resources available in California. It’ll feature Kevin Fetteran from Watch Duty, Daniel Swain from UCANR, and Zeke Lunder from The Lookout.

- J. Tristan Lanza – HCD and CDI and Insurance for Good have partnered and are implementing an Insurance Resilience Planning Program out of the 2023-2024 CDBG Disaster Recovery Grant. The first webinar on June 1 and will be purely information and educational.
- K. Don Hankins – The Indigenous Stewardship Network through the Rekindling Fire and Culture Program and supported through the Regional Fire Forest Capacity Grant has allowed us to allocate 15 grants to tribes and tribal organizations to support their growing fire programs. This includes three cultural fire practitioners who will be doing workshops and equipment support. There is an upcoming convening taking place August 19-21 at the Natural Resources Building for the Indigenous Stewardship Network which will be the first in-person gathering. Registration is available [here](#).
- L. Daniel Berlant – Hosting a Wildland Urban Interface Community Preparedness workshop and symposium at the Hyatt Regency in Orange County August 17-19. More information is available [here](#). There have been lots of legislative hearings over the last several weeks and will see where the legislature goes in the next several months with many bills still pending. On June 5 the Wildfire and Forest Resilience Taskforce meets and will roll out a new action plan.

## **6. PUBLIC COMMENT**

- A. Karen Collins, APCIA

## **7. UPCOMING MEETING DATES FOR 2026**

- A. June 16, 2026  
CAL FIRE, Aviation Management Unit  
5411 Luce Ave.  
McClellan, CA

## **8. MEETING ADJOURNED 2:57 PM**