
WILDFIRE MITIGATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Meeting Minutes – Tuesday, June 20, 2023

Posted: July 7, 2023



Committee Members Present

Daniel Berlant, CAL FIRE – Office of the State Fire Marshal
Mike Parkes, Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
Keali'i Bright, Department of Conservation
Caroline Thomas Jacobs, Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety
J. Lopez, State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection
Ryan Buras, California Office of Emergency Services
Deborah Halberstadt, California Department of Insurance (Virtual)
Michal Maguire, Office of Planning and Research (Virtual)
Jacy Hyde, California Fire Safe Council
Michael Newman, Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety (Virtual)
Dave Winnacker, California Fire Chiefs Association (Virtual)
Chris Ochoa, Representative from the Building Industry
Yana Valachovic, California Fire Science Consortium
Clay Kerchof, Department of Housing and Community Development (Virtual)
Staci Heaton, Rural County Representatives of California
Sophia Lemmo, California Association of Resource Conservation Districts (Virtual)
Sean McGlynn, League of California Cities
Catherine Freeman, California State Association of Counties
Don Hankins, Professor, CSU Chico (Virtual)

Members Absent

Lenya N. Quinn-Davidson, University of California Cooperative Extension

CAL FIRE Staff in Attendance

Frank Bigelow, Assistant Deputy Director
Matt Damon, Staff Chief
Jim McDougald, Staff Chief
John Morgan, Deputy Chief
Scott Witt, Deputy Chief
Dennis O'Neil, Assistant Chief
Chris Ramey, Battalion Chief (Virtual)
Rudy Baltazar, Division Chief
Jeff Hakala, Division Chief
Mark Rosenberg, Research Data Manager (Virtual)
Mark Hillskotter, Battalion Chief
Josh Baker, Battalion Chief
Stephen Volmer, Battalion Chief
Jamie Sammut, Senior Staff Counsel
Tony Andersen, Deputy Director (Virtual)
Anale Burlew, Assistant Deputy Director (Virtual)
Kara Garrett, 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 – Kara Garrett

Quorum Established with 19 committee members present, 7 of which attending virtually.

C. Approval of Past Meeting Minutes (**Motion Required**) – Daniel Berlant

Motion: Sean McGlynn moved to accept the meeting minutes; J Lopez seconded the motion with the amendment of the minutes.

Action: All members voted unanimously to approve the motion.

D. Agenda Review (**Motion Required**) – Daniel Berlant

Motion: Caroline Thomas Jacobs moved to accept the meeting agenda; Sean McGlynn seconded the motion.

Action: All members voted unanimously to approve the motion.

2. OLD BUSINESS

Daniel Berlant / Frank Bigelow

A. Division Report –

i. Community Wildfire Mitigation Assistance –

1. Wildfire Prevention Grants:

a. Applications are currently in the final steps of the review process.

2. Firewise:

a. California continues to lead the nation with 688 National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Firewise USA Communities in good standing.

ii. Wildfire Planning and Statistics –

1. Wildfire Planning:

a. Unit Fire plans have been submitted to regions and are being reviewed.

b. Units testing the new success stories application.

c. Staff continues to review over 1100 public comments for FHSZ and likely to have another public comment period.

2. California Incident Data & Statistics Program:

a. NFIRS (National Fire Incident Reporting System) is transitioning to what will be called NERIS (National Emergency Response Information System).

b. Still in development phase and should not have a significant impact to the CALFIRS system.

3. Fuel Reduction Projects:

a. 526 projects, 105% of the goal.

4. Combined Fuel Reduction:
 - a. 54,208 acres treated, 54% of the goal
 - i. Unit Projects – 28,672 acres
 - ii. Grant Projects – 22,847 acres
5. Prescribed Fire (also counted in fuel reduction):
 - a. 21,502 acres treated, 43% of the goal.

iii. Wildfire Preparedness –

1. Home Hardening:
 - a. Work continues on the Joint Powers Authority with CalOES in the initial three pilot communities.
 - i. San Diego, Shasta, and Lake.
 - b. Staff continue to expand pilots beyond the initial three.
 - i. San Diego, Tuolumne, El Dorado, and Shasta.
 - ii. The JPA recently approved a 100% State funded Defensible Space project in Siskiyou County.
2. Defensible Space Inspections:
 - a. 297,392 inspections, 119% of the goal (as of June 13th).
 - b. As of 6/18, there was a total of 337,968 inspections for the Northern and Southern regions combined to include the contract county figure of 144,268.
 - c. Nearly 80 individuals from Qualified Entities within El Dorado County have been trained to conduct Defensible Space and Home Hardening assessments.
 - d. This is the pilot group, and the results of their efforts will be highlighted in the coming months.
 - i. This came to us from Senate Bill No. 63 (CHAPTER 382 2021).
3. Burn Permits:
 - a. Since Jan 1, 2023, we've issued 45,883 burn permits throughout the state using the new electronic burn permit system.
 - b. More than 5,900 treatment acres approved through General Burn Permit (LE-5) and Broadcast Burn Permit (LE-7) permits.
 - c. <https://burnpermit.fire.ca.gov/>
4. Utility Wildfire Mitigation:
 - a. DSI Powerline Fire Prevention Training Update
 - b. Operation Santa Ana
 - c. Continue to provide Consultation in Wildfire Mitigation Plan review to Energy Safety.

3. NEW BUSINESS

A. Risk Modeling Work Group Update –

1. Workgroup is reviewing the document and will bring the final version to this group.
2. Contacts for the workgroup are listed below:
 1. Jim McDougald
 - i. Jim.McDougald@fire.ca.gov

2. Celeste Jovanovic
 - i. Celeste.Jovanovic@fire.ca.gov
 3. More information on the committee can be found at:
 1. <https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/boards-committees/risk-modeling-advisory-workgroup/>
- B. Land Use Planning Program Overview:
- i. CAL FIRE – Office of the State Fire Marshal Community Wildfire Preparedness and Mitigation Land Use Planning Program Division Chief Carmel Barnhart provided a program overview. Chief Barnhart reviewed the largest and most destructive wildfires in California and also went through the function of the Land Use Planning program. Chief Barnhart provided information on general plans (safety elements), information in the Subdivision Review Program, and the NFPA Firewise USA program.
 1. More information on the Land Use Planning program:
 1. <https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/divisions/community-wildfire-preparedness-and-mitigation/land-use-planning/>
- C. California Office of Energy Infrastructure:
- i. California Electrical Corporations’ Wildfire Mitigation Plans presentation from Director Caroline Thomas Jacobs and Deputy Director Melissa Semcer. Director Thomas Jacobs and Deputy Director Semcer discussed the key elements of the novel innovative regulatory framework as well as a 2020-2022 Wildfire Mitigation Plan Cycle summary. Key areas of continued Improvement (ACIs) over the 2020-2022 cycle were also discussed along with information on Wildfire Mitigation Plan compliance inspection and audit summaries. Information was shared on the 2023-2025 Wildfire Mitigation Plans as well as evaluation schedule and status and the presentation concluded with information on 2026 Wildfire Mitigation Plans and future potential changes.
 1. More information can be found at www.energysafety.ca.gov.

4. ROUNDTABLE

Daniel Berlant

- A. Daniel Berlant:
 - i. The Governor’s executive order waiver is set to expire on June 30, 2023. Beginning in July, state bodies holding virtual meetings will again be required to post the physical location of all attending board and commission members. As of July 1, 2023, if a voting WMAC Committee Member attends the WMAC meeting virtually, they must have their remote location disclosed on the agenda and their location must be available for the public to access.
- B. Dave Winnacker:
 - i. Information that was discussed on CDI list of discounts is available here: <https://www.insurance.ca.gov/01-consumers/105-type/95-guides/03-res/Insurers-Currently-Offering-Discounts.cfm>
- C. Mike Parkes (CAL FIRE):
 - i. Prescribed burns are 43% complete.
- D. J Lopez (Board of Forestry and Fire Protection):

- i. Would like to highlight the importance of the Safety Elements.
- E. Deborah Halberstadt (CA Department of Insurance):
 - i. Hosting a meeting on July 13th on catastrophe modeling.
- F. Michael Maguire (Office of Planning and Research):
 - i. 6/30 will be hosting the Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program (ICARP) technical advisory council meeting.
 - 1. <https://opr.ca.gov/climate/icarp/>
 - ii. OPR just completed amendments for the Woody Feedstock Aggregation Pilot Program. 2 million dollars was allocated to the five grantees.
- G. Jacy Hyde (CA Fire Safe Council):
 - i. Working on grant projects and expanding the County Coordinators program.
- H. Yana Valachovic (CA Fire Science Consortium):
 - i. Have a few events coming up and assisting with the Risk Modeling Advisory Workgroup.
- I. Clay Kerchof (Department of Housing and Community Development):
 - i. Public comment period will open 7/7 for the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG).
 - 1. <https://www.hcd.ca.gov/grants-and-funding/programs-active/community-development-block-grant>
- J. Staci Heaton (Rural County Representatives of California):
 - i. Hosting Board of Director's meeting on 7/12 where Chiefs Berlant and Bigelow will be featured speakers.
- K. Ryan Reger (CA Association of Resource Conservation Districts):
 - i. The post fire playbook is being put together.
 - 1. <https://carcd.org/>

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

Daniel Berlant

- A. No public comment.

6. UPCOMING MEETING DATES FOR 2023

Daniel Berlant

- A. Third Tuesday of each month starting at 1 PM and ending at 3 PM.
 - i. July 18, 2023
 - 1. CNRA Building, 715 P Street, 2nd Floor Conference Room 2-221
Sacramento, CA 95814
National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST):
Camp Fire 4 report on Notifications, Evacuations, Traffic, and
Temporary Refuge Areas

7. MEETING ADJOURNED 3:01 PM

Daniel Berlant

Motion:	Daniel Berlant moved to adjourn the meeting.
Action:	All members voted unanimously to approve the motion.