
WILDFIRE MITIGATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Meeting Minutes – Tuesday, September 16, 2025



Committee Members Present

Daniel Berlant, CAL FIRE, Office of the State Fire Marshal
Bob Counts, 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, Office of Emergency Services
Deborah Halberstadt, Insurance Commissioner's Office (virtual)
Michael McGuire, Office of Land Use & Climate Innovation
Steve Hawks, Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety
Lenya Quinn-Davidson, University of California Cooperative (virtual)
Tristan Lanza, Department of Housing & Community Development (virtual)
Staci Heaton, Rural County Representatives of California (virtual)
Sophia Lemmo, California Association of Resource Conservation Districts (virtual)
Sean McGlynn, League of California Cities (virtual)
Caitlin Loventhal, California State Association of Counties
Don Hankins, Tribal Government Representative (virtual)
Lisa Lien-Mager, California Natural Resources Agency

Members Absent

Jacy Hyde, California Fire Safe Council
Christopher Ochoa, California Building Industry Association
Bill Villarino, California Fire Chiefs Association
Yana Valachovic, California Fire Science Consortium

CAL FIRE Staff in Attendance

Vickie Sakamoto, Assistant State Fire Marshal
Frank Bigelow, Deputy Director
Andrew Henning, Assistant Deputy Director (virtual)
Jim McDougald, Assistant Deputy Director
Chris Keithly, Assistant Deputy Director
Chris Ramey, Division Chief
Matt Damon, Staff Chief
Emily Smith, Staff Chief
John Morgan, Staff Chief
Heather McCully, Deputy Chief
Shane Vargas, Deputy Chief
Shaun Fairbanks, Deputy Chief
Randy Northup, Assistant Chief
Gene Potkey, Assistant Chief
Jamie Sammut, Senior Staff Counsel
Kyle O'Neil, Battalion Chief
Josh Baker, Battalion Chief
Jennifer Renner, Battalion Chief
Kara Garrett, Deputy State Fire Marshal III (virtual)

Jillian Fisher, Staff Services Manager I
Carrie Lewis, Associate Governmental Program Analyst
Justine Grafton, Associate Governmental Program Analyst
Christopher Dale, Associate Governmental Program Analyst
Thomas Setnan, Staff Services Analyst

1. CALL TO ORDER 1:01 PM

Daniel Berlant

A. Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 1:01 PM by Daniel Berlant.

B. Roll Call – Carrie Lewis

A quorum was not established with 10 committee members present in-person and 8 attending virtually.

C. Approval of the August 19, 2025, Meeting Minutes (Motion Required) – Daniel Berlant

The August 19, 2025, meeting minutes were not approved as there was not a quorum.

D. Approval of the September 16, 2025, Agenda (Motion Required) – Daniel Berlant

The September 16, 2025, 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. 60,090 inspections, 24% of the goal (250,000)

ii. Qualified Entity assessment year-to-date total:

o 1,337 assessments

o September training classes:

- Completed San Mateo-Santa Cruz and Madera-Mariposa-Merced CAL FIRE units
- Los Angeles County, September 16-17

o Defensible Space staff will be instructing a Home Ignition Zone/Defensible Space course at the California Fire Prevention Institute's Certification Week, October 1-3

2. Burn Permits

1) 2025 year-to-date total: 58,031

i. Cultural Burn Permits: 1,646

- ii. Continued interest from local air districts to join our permit program
- 3. Home Hardening
 - 1) Developing the Wildland Urban Interface Fire Safety Building Standards Compliance training.
 - 2) Supporting the California Wildfire Mitigation Program with technical assistance with home hardening retrofits.
 - 3) Attended the Tuolumne County Emergency Services Town Hall meeting.
 - 4) Attended the El Dorado County Office of Wildfire Preparedness and Resilience Town Hall meeting
- 4. Utility Wildfire Mitigation Program
 - 1) Continued review of PG&E, SDG&E, SCE, PacifiCorp, Liberty, and the three ITOs – Trans Bay Cable, Horizon West, and LS Power 2026-28 WMP submission.
 - 2) PSPSs continue due to current weather and red flag events. Concluded another PSPS with SCE on September 10, 2025.
 - 3) Powerline inspection and PRC 4292-93 training planned in SHU Unit September 24, 2025.
- i. Wildfire Planning and Statistics – [Fuels Reduction | CAL FIRE](#)
 - 1. Fuel Reduction Projects
 - 1) 163 projects, 32.6% of the goal
 - 2. Combined Fuel Reduction
 - 1) 2,307.2 acres treated, 2.3% of the goal
 - i. Unit Projects – 1,687.9 acres
 - a) Northern Region: 1,350.8 acres
 - b) Southern Region: 337.1 acres
 - 2) Grant Projects: 403.8 acres
 - 3) CFIP Projects: 215.5 acres
 - 3. Prescribed Fire (also counted in fuel reduction)
 - 1) 563.6 acres treated, 1.1% of the goal
 - 4. Wildlands Fuels
 - 1) Team met in person with the Techynoslvia project manager to cover CalMAPPER V4 timelines and to reconcile outstanding issues. An updated timeline to reconcile outstanding issues and implement training in the field has been created with a release date of January 15, 2026.
 - 2) The collection of data from CalMAPPER V3 to meet the department's 4137 reporting requirements has been successful and will remain in place until the first of the year.
 - 5. Pre-Fire Planning
 - 1) Fuels Treatment Effectiveness Reporting (FTER) V2 survey went live on September 2, 2025, and is working well with the new enhancements.
 - 2) FTER deployment to the Butler (SRF) and Pickett Fires resulting in identification of fuels treatments having positive impacts.

- 3) PFE Orientation training will be hosted in November to support new PFEs and drive succession planning efforts.
- 4) With successful pilots in AEU and SDU over the last year using the Vibrant Planet platforms as a planning and reporting tool, program is working with IT Procurement to implement the platform statewide.

6. CalStats

- 1) After reviewing data from January 1 – July 31, 2025, we identified thousands of ignition occurrences with incorrect coordinates, many located outside unit boundaries, out of state, and even in the Pacific Ocean. We implemented a new ignition location tool in Mid-July that includes a geofence around California and new validation rules within CALFIRS. Since the implementation, we have seen zero bad ignitions in the system.
- 2) Hosted “NERIS: Evolving with the Fire Service” webinar which drew 62 participants, featuring ESO as the RMS vendor check-in and welcomed Tom Jerkins from FSR/UL and NERIS Team. The next, and final, webinar will be held on October 20, 2025.
- 3) Beginning in November, looking at launching bi-weekly NERIS “Open Office” sessions through the end of the year to support departments during the transition.

ii. Community Wildfire Mitigation Assistance

1. Intro to Land Use Planning for Wildfire

- 1) Sign up now for classes this fall:
 - i. October 21, 2025 – Calabasas
 - ii. October 23, 2025 – Riverside
 - iii. November 18, 2025 – El Dorado Hills
 - iv. November 10, 2025 - Fresno
- 2) Signups and more information on the Land Use Planning website and at communitywildfire.org
 - i. More details on 2026 classes coming soon!

2. National Fire Protection Association Firewise USA

- 1) Currently 1367 communities in good standing
 - i. More than a dozen in the queue!

3. [CWMA Statewide Clearinghouse Data Center](#)

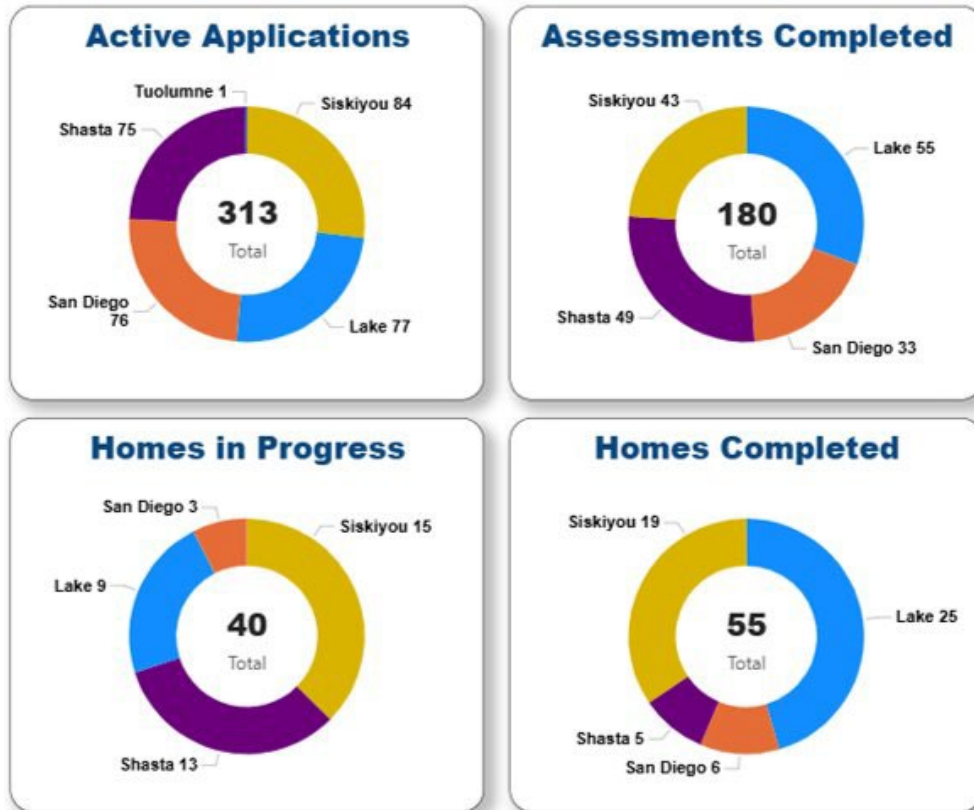
- 1) Adding new information all the time!
- 2) Currently working on new procedures for notification to Constant Contact subscriber list.
- 3) <http://osfm.fire.ca.gov/what-we-do/Community-Wildfire-Preparedness-and-Mitigation/Clearinghouse-Data-Center>

4. [Wildfire Prevention Grants Program](#)

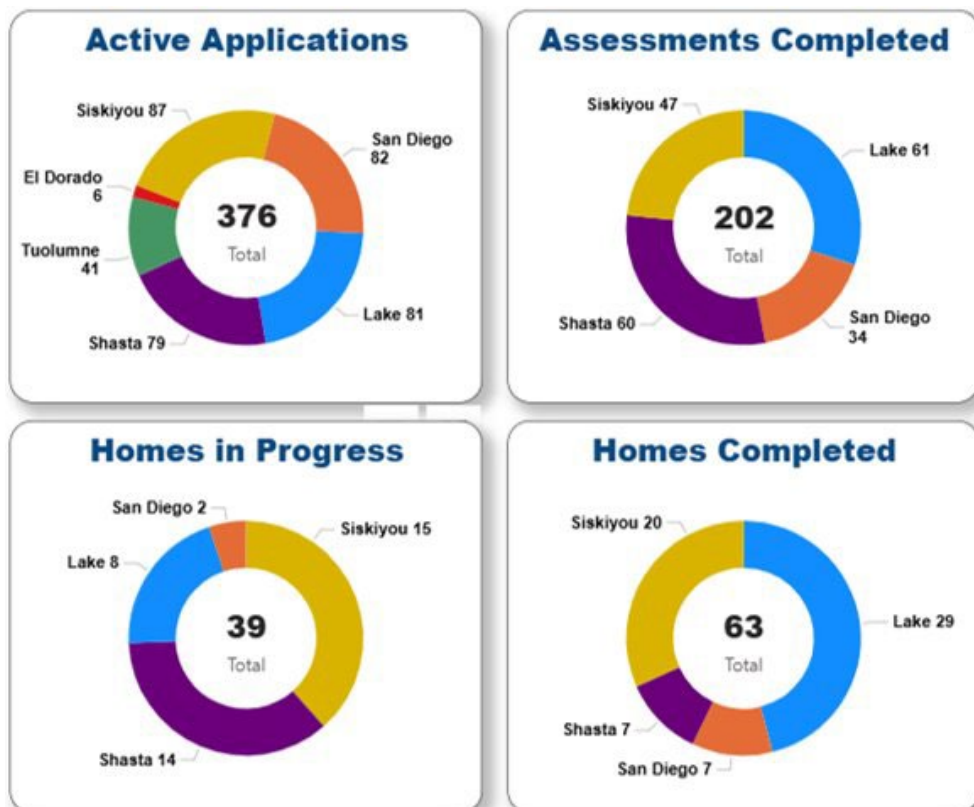
- 1) Open solicitation began on July 2, 2025, and closed August 6, 2025.
 - i. Up to \$135 million available
 - ii. Combination of Prop 4 Climate Bond Funds and CCI
 - iii. Received over 400 applications
 - iv. Unit review to be completed on Friday

B. California Wildfire Mitigation Program Update

i. August 19, 2025



ii. September 16, 2025



- i. Media Event and WMAC Meeting
October 21, 2025
Whitmore, CA, Shasta County



3. MEMBER ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

- A. [Brian Newman Lindsay, Department of Conservation](#)

4. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Neighborhood Wildfire Mitigation Validation Program Workgroup Membership – The first meeting was held on September 15, 2025, discussing the history and background of the development of this advisory group. Also discussed potential name changes that may be proposed to be more in line with the vision of the program. The group reviewed the draft charter, provided input, and hope to have this finalized prior to the next WMAC meeting. Regular recurring meetings were set up which will take place on the second Monday of the month with the next meeting being held on October 13, 2025. The meeting concluded with some general discussion and Q&A.
- B. Land Use Planning Workgroup – The last meeting covered an overview on the LCI and the Vulnerable Communities Platform. Today's meeting will discuss fire resistant building materials.

5. PRESENTATIONS

- A. [Burn Severity Dashboard](#) – Rebecca Wayman and Thomas Crimmel, CAL FIRE
- B. [Eaton Fire Six Months Later: Looking Back and Looking Forward](#) – James Lee, Crescenta Valley Water District

6. ROUNDTABLE

- A. **Caroline Thomas Jacobs** – There is a current public open comment period for the draft WMP update guidelines, which is the rules for how utilities submit for next year's WMPs. They were published about a month ago, the comments close this week on September 18, but any last-minute updates or comments can be done before then.
- B. **Lisa Lien Mager** – 114 fuels reduction projects have been approved through a streamlining process directed by Governor Newsom in his March 1, 2025 State of Emergency Proclamation. Secretary Crowfoot and I joined a field visit in South Lake Tahoe the day before WMAC that focused on a wildfire prevention/fuels reduction project enabled by early action funding from Prop 4 and the Governor's streamlining process.
- C. **J. Lopez** – Working our way through Zone Zero. Attending an event in Ventura County on September 17 with the local government there and are hosting a workshop in Southern California on September 18 at the Pasadena Convention Center.
- D. **Caitlin Loventhal** – Hosting their [Annual Meeting](#) from December 1-5 in Santa Clara County. Planning to have one session specifically dedicated to fire. More details will follow.
- E. **Michael Maguire** – LCI will be hosting an agency briefing on Friday, September 19 on the 4-second market development grant program for biomass pilots. A variety of different state agencies have been invited, including CAL FIRE and a lot of folks that are in this meeting today. The briefing will be delivered by LCI staff in collaboration with grantees. We will provide an overview of the program, the outcomes and will summarize the results from their research moving forward. If you're interested in learning about some of the work that the biomass aggregation pilots have done over the past four years you can join either in person or via the virtual option.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT

Daniel Berlant

- A. There was no public comment

8. UPCOMING MEETING DATES FOR 2025

Daniel Berlant

- A. October 21, 2025
Natural Resources Building
715 P Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Whitmore Community Center
30555 Whitmore Rd.
Whitmore, CA 96096

8. MEETING ADJOURNED 2:43 PM

Daniel Berlant