



CAL FIRE'S 2021-22 FIRE PREVENTION REPORT

TO THE LEGISLATURE

PURSUANT TO PRC 4137 AND SB 170 (BUDGET ACT OF 2021)

**DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY & FIRE PROTECTION (CAL FIRE)
OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL (OSFM),
COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS AND MITIGATION DIVISION**

**DANIEL BERLANT, STATE FIRE MARSHAL
FRANK BIGELOW, ASSISTANT DEPUTY DIRECTOR**



The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection serves and safeguards the people and protects the property and resources of California.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
BACKGROUND.....	3
FIRE PREVENTION ACTIVITIES (PRC 4137)	6
WILDFIRE PREVENTION GRANTS (SB 170)	10

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CAL FIRE annually reports the work completed in fire prevention per Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 4137 and most recently, Senate Bill 170 (Chapter 240, Statutes of 2021). Many of these activities and accomplishments have also been reported throughout the year in media stories and to the California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection.

The reporting period covers activities completed by and funded by CAL FIRE through grants from July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022. During this reporting period, CAL FIRE and partner agencies were also heavily committed to the suppression of the Dixie and Caldor fires, both the first and second wildfires to burn over the granite crest of the Sierra Nevada, along with the Monument and River Complex fires. Each of those four wildfires are among the top twenty largest wildfires in California's recorded history.

Despite the significant drain on resources posed by those four mega fires, the Department accomplished its goal of treating more than 100,000 acres for the third consecutive year. This report details the activities within CAL FIRE's Fire Prevention Program that are identified in PRC 4137 and includes totals for the Wildfire Prevention Grants program awarded throughout the State.

BACKGROUND

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) is dedicated to the fire protection, prevention, and stewardship of almost 31 million acres of California's privately-owned wildlands. In addition, the Department provides varied emergency services in more than half of the State's counties via contracts with local governments.

Preventing wildfires in the State Responsibility Area (SRA) is a vital part of CAL FIRE's mission. While these efforts have occurred since the early days of the Department, CAL FIRE has adapted to the evolving destructive wildfires and succeeded in significantly increasing its efforts in fire prevention. The Department's Fire Prevention Program is administered by the newly established Community Wildfire and Mitigation Division, and consists of multiple activities including wildland pre-fire planning, vegetation management, land use planning, public education, and law enforcement. Typical fire prevention projects include fuel reduction, prescribed fire, defensible space inspections, land use planning, emergency evacuation planning, fire prevention education, fire hazard severity mapping, and fire-related law enforcement activities.

Drastic climatic and ecological conditions led to the anticipation of a potentially above-average wildfire season on the heels of two previous such seasons in 2020 and 2021.

The 2021 wildfire season in California experienced an unusually early start amid an ongoing drought and historically low rainfall. In July 2021, more than three times as many acres had burned compared to the previous year through that date, with drought, extreme heat, and reduced snowpack contributing to the severity of the fires. On August 18, 2021, California faced “unprecedented fire conditions” as multiple fires, including the Dixie Fire, McFarland Fire, Caldor Fire, and others, raged on. In October, much of California received its first rain in over 200 days, thereby reducing wildfire risks throughout the State—especially in areas of Northern California.

California continues to experience longer wildfire seasons as a direct result of climate change. In early 2022, extended dryness originating from January into the Spring with little precipitation left most of the State in moderate to extreme drought conditions prior to Summer. These continued dry conditions with above-normal temperatures through Spring and late Summer left fuel moisture levels lower than normal, leading to over 7,200 wildland fires burning over 362,000 acres and over 850 structures destroyed across the State in Fire Year 2022.

During Fiscal Year 2021-22, CAL FIRE’s fuel reduction (mechanical and prescribed fire) efforts were once again challenged by climate change, a reduction in CDCR crew availability, and wildfire activity. In 2021, the Pandemic led to reduced crew staffing and the repetitive isolation of entire crews during COVID-19 exposures and outbreaks. CAL FIRE’s crew numbers were a challenge due to the shortage of program-eligible inmates, which significantly impacted the available workforce to perform fuel reduction projects. Due to an early start to the 2022 fire year, resources that typically would have been available for fuel reduction projects were used for fire suppression. Despite these challenges, CAL FIRE was still able to meet its goal of 100,000 acres of prescribed fire and mechanical fuel reduction in the Fiscal Year 2021-22. In August of 2022, CAL FIRE launched an interactive online fuel reduction viewer, making it easier for the public to see the location of recent fuel reduction projects. This fuels reduction viewer provides a look at the work in progress this year and completed projects last fiscal year. The viewer is available at the CAL FIRE website: www.fire.ca.gov/fuels-reduction/.

The Administration’s “all of the above” strategy has been an effective approach to preventing wildfire and ensuring communities become more resistant to wildfire impacts. This approach is multi-pronged, emphasizing the importance of several activities simultaneously. Homeowner efforts on defensible space and home hardening, combined with community-level fuel breaks and landscape-level projects create the spectrum of wildfire prevention projects that make a difference.

California’s changing climate will continue to alter ways of life in California. We must work towards a natural environment that is more fire resilient; buildings and infrastructure that are more fire resistant; and a society that is more aware of and responsive to the benefits and threats of wildland fire; all achieved through local, State, federal, tribal, and private partnerships.

The 2021-22 budget included new, significant funding augmentations, and other changes to CAL FIRE’s budget that will continue to help CAL FIRE achieve the State’s Strategic Fire Plan goals. This included a one-time increase of \$203.3 million from the General Fund and 65 positions in 2021-22 to increase wildfire resilience in forestlands and high-risk communities through 13 new and existing CAL FIRE programs. These programs will address the most pressing vegetation management and community protection projects that are known to CAL FIRE and its partners, and meet the statutory requirements specific to defensible space inspections and home hardening retrofitting required by AB 38 (Chapter 391, Statutes of 2019).

FIRE PREVENTION ACTIVITIES (PRC 4137)

Pursuant to PRC 4137, listed below is the breakdown of the Fire Prevention activities performed by the Department on lands designated as SRA by fiscal year, and by counties, where, pursuant to a contract with the Department, a county has agreed to provide fire protection services in the SRA within county boundaries on behalf of the Department.

Fire Prevention Funding

Funding source and estimated amounts for the fire prevention activities are listed below.

CAL FIRE Fire Prevention Estimated FY 21-22 Costs		
Fire Prevention Activity	Total	Funding Source
Defensible Space Inspections	\$9.3	\$2.9 GGRF / \$6.4 GF
Fuel Reduction	\$76	\$39 GGRF / \$37 GF
Public Education	\$4.4	\$2.4 GGRF / \$2 GF
Wildfire Prevention Grants	\$118.3	\$78.3 GGRF / \$40 GF

GF: General Fund, GGRF: Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund. Dollars in Millions.

Defensible Space, Fuel Reduction, and Public Education

Defensible space inspections and enforcement, fuel reduction, and public education are critical actions to help combat wildfires and the effects of these potential disasters. The table outlines numbers for the Fiscal Year 2021-22 compared to previous fiscal years.

Statewide Fire Prevention Activities					
	FY 2017-18	FY 2018-19	FY 2019-20	FY 2020-21	FY 2021-22
Defensible Space Inspections (DSI)	217,666	204,341	222,040	227,656	289,255
<i>Northern Region DSI</i>	<i>61,392</i>	<i>47,629</i>	<i>64,390</i>	<i>71,164</i>	<i>76,178</i>
<i>Southern Region DSI</i>	<i>156,274</i>	<i>156,712</i>	<i>157,650</i>	<i>156,492</i>	<i>213,077</i>
Defensible Space Citations Issued	62	549	973	683	737
<i>Northern Region DSI Citations</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>60</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>34</i>
<i>Southern Region DSI Citations</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>489</i>	<i>931</i>	<i>666</i>	<i>703</i>
Public Education Hours	50,829	38,165	31,490	33,552	10,768
<i>Northern Region PE Hours</i>	<i>25,669</i>	<i>13,807</i>	<i>9,160</i>	<i>13,224</i>	<i>4,141</i>
<i>Southern Region PE Hours</i>	<i>26,160</i>	<i>24,358</i>	<i>22,330</i>	<i>20,328</i>	<i>6,627</i>

Statewide Fuels Reduction Activities					
	Fiscal Year 2017-18	Fiscal Year 2018-19	Fiscal Year 2019-20	Fiscal Year 2020-21	Fiscal Year 2021-22
Mechanical Fuel Reduction (Acres)	11,412	13,932	27,894	11,729	10,590
<i>Northern Region MFR (Acres)</i>	<i>8,362</i>	<i>9,229</i>	<i>15,935</i>	<i>6,742</i>	<i>6,083</i>
<i>Southern Region MFR (Acres)</i>	<i>3,049</i>	<i>4,703</i>	<i>11,959</i>	<i>4,987</i>	<i>4,508</i>
Prescribed Burn (Acres)	19,197	30,664	29,858	30,994	14,035
<i>Northern Region PB (Acres)</i>	<i>11,639</i>	<i>14,675</i>	<i>13,856</i>	<i>15,117</i>	<i>6,512</i>
<i>Southern Region PB (Acres)</i>	<i>7,558</i>	<i>15,989</i>	<i>16,002</i>	<i>15,878</i>	<i>7,523</i>
Wildfire Prevention Grants (Acres)	3,143	7,524	18,725	21,315	20,999
<i>Northern Region WP Grant (Acres)</i>	<i>1,880</i>	<i>5,705</i>	<i>16,130</i>	<i>13,198</i>	<i>13,903</i>
<i>Southern Region WP Grant (Acres)</i>	<i>1,263</i>	<i>1,819</i>	<i>2,595</i>	<i>8,117</i>	<i>7,096</i>
Forest Health Grant (Acres)	480	6,477	27,029	52,630	55,924
<i>Northern Region FH Grant (Acres)</i>	<i>480</i>	<i>3,537</i>	<i>24,212</i>	<i>46,008</i>	<i>45,232</i>
<i>Southern Region FH Grant (Acres)</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>2,940</i>	<i>2,816</i>	<i>6,622</i>	<i>10,691</i>
Total Acres Treated	34,232	58,597	103,506	116,668	101,548

Numbers may be different by 1 due to rounding. These figures have been updated from the 2020-21 Report due to late grant project reporting, as well as minor validation adjustments.

Definitions:

Mechanical Fuel Reduction: This category includes activities associated with the following treatment objectives:

- **Fuel Reduction** - Work conducted in an area where the primary objective is to reduce fuel load. This objective excludes prescribed burning. However, fuel reduction may be used to record activities conducted to reduce fuel loads or change fuel arrangements in advance of a prescribed fire treatment objective. Pile Burning activities are also included under Fuel Reduction.
- **Fuel Break** - An area of modified vegetation that provides a safe location from which to fight fire, and which reduces fire spread, duration, and intensity. Fuel breaks sometimes contain flammable vegetation.
- **Right of Way Clearance** - Also known as Roadway Clearance. Work conducted on a fire road or other roads to keep them in a usable condition.

Prescribed Burn: This category includes activities associated with the following treatment objective:

- **Broadcast Burn** - A Prescribed Fire objective. Broadcast Burn is the controlled application of fire to wildland fuels in their natural or modified state over a predefined area, often conducted to reduce wildland fire fuel loads, restore the ecological health of an area, or clear vegetation.

Civil Cost Recovery

CAL FIRE’s Civil Cost Recovery Program continues to be an effective way to deter carelessly caused fires and assigns fire suppression costs to culpable parties rather than to taxpayers. Monies collected in these cost recovery efforts are returned to the State’s General Fund.

Civil Cost Recovery Program Fire Suppression Costs Recovered						
Fiscal Year	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Amount	\$15.7	\$20.8	\$4.3	\$17.3	\$18.6	\$32.1

Dollars in Millions.

Projected Fire Prevention Activities

The projected fire prevention activities for Fiscal Year 2022-23 are as follows.

Fire Prevention Activity	Target Total
Defensible Space Inspections	250,000
Combined Mechanical Fuel Reduction & Prescribed Burn (Acres)	100,000

Amador Contracts (PRC 4144)

The chart below provides the number of contracts and reimbursement amounts received from local governments for the Department to provide local fire protection and emergency services pursuant to PRC Section 4144, commonly referred to as “Amador agreements.”

CAL FIRE Amador Contracts	
Number of Contracts	Total Contracted Amount
27	\$8.9 million

Dollars in Millions.

Contract Name	21-22 Contracted Total
Butte County	\$828,044.00
City of Pismo Beach	\$35,239.00
County of Humboldt	\$274,627.00
County of Madera	\$717,251.00
County of Napa	\$174,786.15

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CAL FIRE – OSFM, Community Wildfire Preparedness and Mitigation Division**

Contract Name	21-22 Contracted Total
County of San Diego	\$195,153.00
County of San Mateo	\$646,333.00
County of Santa Cruz	\$64,710.00
East Contra Costa FPD	\$511,650.00
El Dorado County ESA	\$9,141.00
Fresno County	\$1,108,040.00
Higgins FPD	\$260,866.00
Lockwood Fire Protection District	\$188,147.00
Loma Rica/Browns Valley CSD	\$252,872.00
Mariposa County	\$440,379.00
North Bay Fire	\$297,399.00
Placer County	\$724,249.00
San Luis Obispo County	\$119,086.00
Shasta-Tehama-Trinity JCCD	\$220,804.00
Siskiyou County, General Fire	\$175,741.00
South Lake County FPD	\$43,790.25
South Santa Clara County	\$532,205.00
Tehama County	\$39,120.00
Town of Paradise	\$68,696.00
Trinity County	\$18,009.00
Tuolumne County	\$553,277.00
Yuima MWD	\$382,165.00

WILDFIRE PREVENTION GRANTS (SB 170)

CAL FIRE's Wildfire Prevention Grants Program provides funding for fire prevention projects and activities in and near fire-threatened communities that focus on increasing the protection of people, structures, and communities. Funded activities include hazardous fuel reduction, wildfire prevention planning, and wildfire prevention education.

[California's Strategic Fire Plan](#) serves as a roadmap for project development. Projects are evaluated based on the overall benefit to reduce the threat of wildfires to people, structures, and communities. CAL FIRE considers the wildfire hazards and risks of an area, the geographic balance of projects, and whether the project is complementary to other fire prevention or forest health activities when awarding grants. Disadvantaged and low-income communities as defined by Assembly Bill 1550 (Gomez) (Statutes of 2016, Chapter 369), and projects that demonstrate a carbon benefit by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and contain matching funds will receive additional priority. Projects are selected on a competitive basis and consecutive awards are not guaranteed.

CAL FIRE's Wildfire Prevention Grants program posted grant solicitation announcements through various media:

- Wildfire Prevention Grants email listserv
- California State Library Grant Clearinghouse
- California Air Resource Board California Climate Investments Events Calendar
- CAL FIRE Website
- CAL FIRE Press Release

Additionally, CAL FIRE's Wildfire Prevention Grants program conducted a virtual workshop via Microsoft Teams. This workshop was attended by over 400 potential applicants and the recorded workshop has been viewed by additional interested applicants. The Wildfire Prevention Grants webpage was designed to showcase the workshop recording as well as other tutorials and tools to assist applicants with the application and mapping process. The Wildfire Prevention Grants program email listserv was used to provide specific information related to the program as well as other grant programs from other agencies. Staff also provided one-on-one technical assistance for all portions of the application process as well as the post-award process. Northern and Southern Region staff also conducted workshops and made site visits to local CAL FIRE Units to assist applicants. Unsuccessful applicants received feedback on why their application was unsuccessful along with how to improve their application for future grant cycles.

**2021-22 Fire Prevention Report to the Legislature,
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Pursuant to Senate Bill 170 (Chapter 240, Statutes of 2021), the chart below shows the number of grant applications and awards by county for the Fiscal Year 2021-22 (July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022).

County	Number of Applications Received	Number of Grants Awarded	Amount Asked	Amount Awarded
Alameda	2	1	\$8,053,066	\$2,878,104
Alpine	1	1	\$120,810	\$120,810
Amador	1	1	\$726,000	\$726,000
Butte	8	5	\$9,036,286	\$4,014,044
Calaveras	17	10	\$7,533,413	\$3,993,204
Contra Costa	3	1	\$5,328,279	\$3,000,780
El Dorado	10	4	\$8,868,654	\$4,152,483
Fresno	5	4	\$10,611,761	\$6,468,439
Glenn	4	3	\$5,733,738	\$3,005,178
Humboldt	2	2	\$2,255,601	\$1,960,732
Inyo	1	1	\$1,341,227	\$1,341,227
Kern	5	5	\$4,620,125	\$4,515,093
Kings	2	0	\$80,038	\$ -
Lake	2	1	\$2,107,437	\$1,440,176
Los Angeles	18	13	\$9,343,972	\$3,250,856
Madera	3	3	\$1,576,359	\$1,605,359
Marin	5	2	\$8,077,797	\$3,950,112
Mariposa	5	4	\$2,470,921	\$1,977,786
Mendocino	8	4	\$10,649,723	\$4,859,181
Modoc	2	1	\$1,155,759	\$593,559
Mono	2	2	\$1,370,551	\$1,258,551
Monterey	4	3	\$5,893,978	\$5,266,910
Nevada	5	2	\$8,045,824	\$3,729,774
Orange	4	3	\$892,746	\$356,999
Placer	6	1	\$11,754,374	\$539,888
Plumas	1	1	\$3,813,123	\$2,421,222
Riverside	3	3	\$5,354,440	\$5,354,440
Sacramento	1	0	\$4,221,399	\$ -
San Benito	1	1	\$656,000	\$675,971
San Bernardino	4	4	\$1,916,703	\$1,282,356
San Diego	7	2	\$4,400,233	\$114,243
San Luis Obispo	5	5	\$9,279,408	\$9,279,408
San Mateo	9	3	\$6,048,327	\$3,199,109

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Santa Barbara	5	5	\$6,337,733	\$6,178,515
Santa Clara	6	1	\$2,631,596	\$1,456,579
Santa Cruz	3	2	\$2,208,746	\$870,169
Shasta	8	4	\$21,509,661	\$5,774,484
Siskiyou	9	5	\$11,477,919	\$2,914,411
Solano	1	0	\$3,405,484	\$ -
Sonoma	11	4	\$6,628,454	\$2,642,874
Stanislaus	1	1	\$136,186	\$136,186
Statewide	1	1	\$670,976	\$670,976
Tehama	1	1	\$4,997,462	\$3,055,214
Trinity	2	0	\$3,965,341	\$ -
Tulare	14	14	\$2,658,504	\$3,225,347
Tuolumne	9	4	\$4,053,150	\$1,098,959
Ventura	10	6	\$4,344,516	\$1,424,784
Yuba	4	1	\$3,779,945	\$1,499,750
Total	241	145	\$242,143,743	\$118,280,241