



2020/21 FIRE PREVENTION REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

PURSUANT TO PRC 4137 AND SB 85 (BUDGET ACT OF 2020)

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OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL (OSFM),
COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS AND MITIGATION DIVISION**

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

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Executive Summary

Annually, CAL FIRE reports the work completed in fire prevention per Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 4137 and most recently, Senate Bill 85. Many of these activities and accomplishments have also been reported throughout the year at various legislative hearings, media stories, and to the California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection. This report details the activities within CAL FIRE’s Fire Prevention Program, which totaled \$183.5 million in FY 20/21. Included in this total are the Fire Prevention Grants awarded throughout the State, with the northern region receiving more than \$70 million, southern region over \$63 million and statewide \$4 million in funding for various projects.

The reporting period covers activities from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021. The following highlights the included information and accomplishments:

- Fire Prevention Activities:
 - Defensible Space Inspections totaling 227,656
 - Defensible Space citations issued: 683
 - Public Education hours: 33,552
 - Mechanical Fuel Reduction: 12,640 acres
 - Prescribed Fire Fuel Reduction: 32,145 acres
- Fire Prevention Funding; and
- Fire Suppression Costs recovered through the Civil Cost Recovery Program totaled \$18.6 million; and
- CAL FIRE’s target goals for fire prevention activities for Fiscal Year 2021/22; and
- The number of and total contracted amount for CAL FIRE’s Amador Contracts; and
- The number of grant applications and awards for the Fire Prevention Grants Program, by county.

Background

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) is dedicated to the fire protection, prevention, and stewardship of over 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 consists of multiple activities including wildland pre-fire engineering, vegetation management, fire planning, land use planning, education, and law enforcement. Typical fire prevention projects include fuels 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.

The 2020 and 2021 Fire Seasons will be counted among the most severe since the founding of our nation. The 2020 Fire Siege, which began on August 17, 2020, with over 13,000 lightning strikes igniting more than 300 fires. The Siege claimed the lives of 28 civilians and three firefighters, destroyed 9,248 structures and consumed 4.2 million acres. California experienced its first "Gigafire," with the August Complex consuming over one million acres alone. The SCU and LNU Lightning Complexes were burning at the same time and at the time of containment were the 3rd and 4th largest fires in California history. The Creek Fire grew to be the largest single fire in California history that did not originate as a complex of fires. Watersheds were eradicated, communities decimated, and the quality of life for 40 million Californians temporarily diminished.



In early 2021, fire activity continued across the state, including an over 800-acre fire in Siskiyou County that started on March 27. Although it is generally uncommon to see a fire of this magnitude occur during this time of year in far northern California, it is becoming a normal occurrence. The following months remained active with large fires such as the Dixie, Caldor, and Monument fires, and as of the completion of this report, more than 2.5 million acres has burned and over 3,600 structures have been destroyed in another catastrophic season.

During Fiscal Year 2020/21, CAL FIRE’s fuel reduction (mechanical and prescribed fire) efforts were significantly challenged due to a number of factors from a global Pandemic and Climate Change, to a reduction in crew availability and unprecedented wildfire activity. 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 inmate labor which significantly impacted the available workforce to perform fuel reduction projects. Due to the unprecedented 2020 fire year and early start to the 2021 fire year, resources that typically would have been available for fuel reduction projects were used for fire suppression. For these reasons, CAL FIRE experienced a reduction in the number of mechanical fuel reduction acres treated in Fiscal Year 2020/21. However, due to a renewed focus on prescribed fire, CAL FIRE was able to increase the number of these treated acres in Fiscal Year 2020/21.

The Department’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 must be undertaken to truly make a difference.

As the wildfires over the past several years have highlighted, California’s changing climate will continue to threaten Californian’s ways of life. We must all 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.

In Fiscal Year 2020/21, the State of California made a significant investment into fire prevention through the Wildfire and Forest Resilience Budget Package. Over a billion dollars was allocated to various projects across multiple departments. It is important to note that this report only reflects the funding and accomplishments by CAL FIRE and is not intended to provide the full picture of the State’s efforts.

Fire Prevention Activities (PRC 4137)

Pursuant to PRC 4137, the below is the breakdown of the fiscal year Fire Prevention activities performed by the Department on lands designated as SRA, 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

The funding source and estimated amounts for the fire prevention activities listed below.

CAL FIRE Fire Prevention Estimated FY 20/21 Costs		
Fire Prevention Activity	Total	Fund
Defensible Space Inspections	\$18.6	\$16.2 GGRF / \$2 GF
Fuel Reduction	\$19.8	\$9.8 GGRF / \$10 GF
Public Education	\$7.1	Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund
Fire Prevention Grants	\$138	\$73 GF / \$65 GGRF

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 the numbers for Fiscal Year 2020/21 compared to previous fiscal years.

Statewide Fire Prevention Activities					
	FY 2016/17	FY 2017/18	FY 2018/19	FY 2019/20	FY 2020/21
Defensible Space Inspections (DSI)	222,652	217,666	204,341	222,040	227,656
<i>Northern Region DSI</i>	<i>52,268</i>	<i>61,392</i>	<i>47,629</i>	<i>64,390</i>	<i>71,164</i>
<i>Southern Region DSI</i>	<i>170,384</i>	<i>156,274</i>	<i>156,712</i>	<i>157,650</i>	<i>156,492</i>
Defensible Space Citations Issued	296	62	549	973	683
<i>Northern Region DSI Citations</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>60</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>Southern Region DSI Citations</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>489</i>	<i>931</i>	<i>666</i>
Public Education Hours	5,884	50,829	38,165	31,490	33,552
<i>Northern Region PE Hours</i>	<i>3,081</i>	<i>25,669</i>	<i>13,807</i>	<i>9,160</i>	<i>13,224</i>
<i>Southern Region PE Hours</i>	<i>2,803</i>	<i>26,160</i>	<i>24,358</i>	<i>22,330</i>	<i>20,328</i>

Statewide Fuels Reduction Activities					
	Fiscal Year 2016/17	Fiscal Year 2017/18	Fiscal Year 2018/19	Fiscal Year 2019/20	Fiscal Year 2020/21
Mechanical Fuel Reduction (Acres)	16,326	11,371	13,909	27,939	11,751
<i>Northern Region MFR (Acres)</i>	<i>10,595</i>	<i>8,361</i>	<i>9,205</i>	<i>15,980</i>	<i>6,808</i>
<i>Southern Region MFR (Acres)</i>	<i>5,731</i>	<i>3,009</i>	<i>4,704</i>	<i>11,959</i>	<i>4,943</i>
Prescribed Burn (Acres)	14,172	19,197	30,664	29,858	31,641
<i>Northern Region PB (Acres)</i>	<i>8,452</i>	<i>11,639</i>	<i>14,675</i>	<i>13,856</i>	<i>15,764</i>
<i>Southern Region PB (Acres)</i>	<i>5,720</i>	<i>7,558</i>	<i>15,989</i>	<i>16,002</i>	<i>15,878</i>
Wildfire Prevention Grant (Acres)	6,186	3,144	3,028	21,082	17,099
<i>Northern Region WP Grant (Acres)</i>	<i>1,834</i>	<i>1,881</i>	<i>1,208</i>	<i>18,482</i>	<i>10,013</i>
<i>Southern Region WP Grant (Acres)</i>	<i>4,352</i>	<i>1,263</i>	<i>1,819</i>	<i>2,600</i>	<i>7,086</i>
Forest Health Grant (Acres)	0*	480	6,235	27,163	50,837
<i>Northern Region FH Grant (Acres)</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>480</i>	<i>3,295</i>	<i>24,346</i>	<i>45,820</i>
<i>Southern Region FH Grant (Acres)</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>2,940</i>	<i>2,816</i>	<i>5,017</i>
Total Acres Treated	36,684	34,192	53,835	106,041	111,328

Some totals may round. *The Forest Health Grant Program began receiving funding in 2017/18.

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	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Amount	\$9.9	\$15.7	\$20.8	\$4.3	\$17.3	\$18.6

Dollars in Millions.

Projected Fire Prevention Activities

The projected fire prevention activities for Fiscal Year 2021/22 are as follows.

Fire Prevention Activity	Target Total
Defensible Space Inspections	250,000
Combined Mechanical Fuel Reduction & Prescribed Burn (Acres)	45,000

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
29	\$9.4 million

Contract Name	20/21 Contracted Total
El Dorado County ESA	\$8,705.75
Lockwood Fire Protection District	\$179,187.00
North Bay Fire	\$325,329.00
Loma Rica/Browns Valley CSD	\$240,831.00
Higgins FPD	\$248,443.00
East Contra Costa FPD	\$552,356.00
South Santa Clara County	\$523,468.75
Trinity County	\$13,442.00
Siskiyou County, McCloud ZIB	\$44,719.00
Fresno County	\$1,196,583.00
Mariposa County	\$299,841.00
Yuima MWD	\$378,388.00
County of Humboldt	\$302,384.00
County of Napa	\$166,463.00
South Lake County FPD	\$41,705.00
County of San Mateo	\$615,555.00
County of Santa Cruz	\$61,628.00
Butte County	\$920,921.00
Town of Paradise	\$66,139.00
Placer County	\$799,608.00
Shasta-Tehama-Trinity JCCD	\$223,879.00
Tehama County	\$39,200.00
Siskiyou County, General Fire	\$165,744.00
County of San Diego	\$207,869.00
San Luis Obispo County	\$113,415.00
City of Pismo Beach	\$76,714.00
County of Madera	\$731,681.00
Tuolumne County	\$526,931.00
Monterey County	\$ 374,655.00

Fire Prevention Grant Breakdown (SB 85)

CAL FIRE's Fire 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 with an emphasis on improving public health and safety while reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

[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 will consider 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 Fire Prevention Grants posted grant solicitation announcements through various media:

- Fire Prevention Grants Email distribution list
- California State Library Grant Clearinghouse
- California Air Resource Board California Climate Investments Events Calendar
- CAL FIRE Website
- CAL FIRE Press Release

Additionally, CAL FIRE Fire Prevention Grants conducted two virtual workshops via Teams. These workshops were attended by over 600 potential applicants and the recorded workshop has been viewed multiple times by interested applicants. The Fire 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 Fire Prevention Grants email was widely distributed and provided specific information related to the program as well as other grant programs from other agencies. Additionally, FP Grants staff 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 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.

**2020/21 Fire Prevention Report to the Legislature,
CAL FIRE – OSFM, Community Wildfire Preparedness and Mitigation Division**

Pursuant to Senate Bill 85 Budget Act of 2020, the chart below shows the number of grant applications and awards by county for Fiscal Year 2020/21 (July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021).

County	Number of Applications Received	Number of grants awarded	Amount Asked	Amount Awarded
Alameda	6	3	\$5,421,411	\$1,491,779
Alpine	2	0	\$3,671,428	\$0
Amador	1	1	\$515,405	\$515,405
Butte	12	3	\$9,265,069	\$1,267,057
Calaveras	17	1	\$6,258,702	\$440,608
Colusa	1	0	\$463,814	\$0
Contra Costa	5	1	\$16,415,922	\$6,380,563
CSR	1	1	\$19,558,683	\$13,864,977
Del Norte	1	1	\$3,747,739	\$3,573,916
El Dorado	13	2	\$13,695,388	\$1,705,581
Fresno	4	2	\$15,157,643	\$4,348,503
Glenn	2	1	\$1,078,508	\$409,586
Humboldt	6	2	\$15,400,615	\$1,051,834
Imperial	0	0	\$0	\$0
Inyo	4	2	\$1,703,178	\$561,820
Kern	10	7	\$2,869,961	\$2,193,975
Kings	0	0	\$0	\$0
Lake	2	1	\$623,463	\$503,224
Lassen	2	2	\$12,580,262	\$9,291,472
Los Angeles	16	12	\$9,230,705	\$7,423,519
Madera	2	1	\$347,842	\$247,842
Marin	5	3	\$2,805,797	\$1,424,697
Mariposa	5	2	\$1,866,836	\$969,960
Mendocino	3	1	\$5,595,298	\$567,596
Merced	0	0	\$0	\$0
Modoc	2	0	\$1,095,138	\$0
Mono	3	0	\$2,083,770	\$0
Monterey	4	1	\$786,073	\$275,000
Napa	2	1	\$6,793,500	\$5,855,215
Nevada	4	1	\$10,531,866	\$952,610
Orange	5	3	\$4,045,520	\$1,531,501
Placer	8	2	\$16,028,625	\$4,798,980
Plumas	7	2	\$8,947,653	\$5,801,001
Riverside	8	4	\$13,811,772	\$2,536,420
San Benito	1	1	\$705,023	\$705,023

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San Bernardino	4	2	\$2,413,662	\$866,604
San Diego	16	4	\$26,333,434	\$5,829,060
San Francisco	0	0	\$0	\$0
San Joaquin	0	0	\$0	\$0
San Luis Obispo	9	3	\$5,828,746	\$5,123,143
San Mateo	10	1	\$5,546,223	\$2,679,223
Santa Barbara	5	4	\$7,679,637	\$7,525,777
Santa Clara	4	0	\$3,616,851	\$0
Santa Cruz	1	1	\$861,639	\$1,263,079
Shasta	8	2	\$15,336,529	\$9,004,870
Sierra	1	1	\$1,619,162	\$1,619,162
Siskiyou	17	3	\$15,445,297	\$1,201,775
Solano	5	1	\$4,548,374	\$900,000
Sonoma	20	1	\$15,304,365	\$934,286
Stanislaus	2	0	\$217,086	\$0
Sutter	0	0	\$0	\$0
Tehama	2	2	\$5,057,289	\$5,169,289
Trinity	2	1	\$13,883,288	\$2,119,488
Tulare	15	4	\$3,528,577	\$1,319,715
Tuolumne	10	6	\$5,882,137	\$3,819,771
Ventura	7	4	\$4,185,396	\$3,687,090
Yolo	3	0	\$2,179,412	\$0
Yuba	2	0	\$1,125,861	\$0
Statewide	1	1	\$4,000,000	\$4,000,000