

Hannigan, Edith@BOF

From: dwood8@cox.net
Sent: Wednesday, December 4, 2019 5:54 PM
To: Public Comments@BOF
Subject: Comments on CalFire's proposed California Vegetation Treatment Program (CalVTP)

Warning: this message is from an external user and should be treated with caution.

12/4/2019

Dr Keith Gilles, Chair
Board of Forestry and Fire Protection
P.O. Box 944246
Sacramento, CA 94244-2460

RE: Item 9, December 11, 2019 meeting, California Vegetation Treatment Program (CalVTP)

Dear Chairperson Gilles and Members of the Board:

The proposed Vegetation Treatment Program (VTP) would be an ineffective response to major wind-blown wildfires and wastefully spend billions of dollars in taxpayer money.

The VTP would remove native vegetation across a vastly over-scaled 250,000-acre footprint *each year*, at massive financial and ecological cost.

You may be under the impression that its primary purpose is to protect Californians from the devastating wind-driven fires that have ravaged Paradise, Santa Rosa, Ventura, and many other areas of the state places over recent years. You may think it will save some of the billions of dollars now spent by the state and federal governments fighting these fires.

But it will do none of these things.

CalFire openly admits that the program would be *ineffective* for the fires that have caused the vast majority of loss of life and property damage, which are the ones being *driven by wind*.

Despite this fact, CalFire proposes to enact the *very same program* for fires not being driven by wind, although these typically come under control easily and are *not* the fires of concern.

Indeed, in many parts of the state, the VTP will not only do no good, but would be *counterproductive* by promoting highly flammable invasive species and weeds.

Truly, the VTP needs a ground-up, scientific and cost-benefit assessment. We ask you to have the courage to recognize a vastly over-scaled boondoggle when you see it. Please direct the Natural Resources Agency and CalFire to pause on the VTP planning process and confer with fire ecologists, fire managers and stakeholders about how and where vegetation treatments can actually achieve benefit.

Keeping new real estate development out of known wildfire corridors, hardening of existing structures, enforcing defensible space, highly strategic fuel breaks, and improving early warning and evacuation systems all make sense and are advised by fire scientists. But the grandiose VTP – by CalFire’s own admission – *does not address* the very urgent problem of catastrophic wind-driven fires.

Please bring scientific and budgetary accountability to CalFire.

Sincerely,

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cc: Secretary of Natural Resources