

BOARD OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION

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**Range Management Advisory Committee Meeting (RMAC)****Meeting Minutes****Posting Date:** Monday, November 13, 2023**Meeting Date:** Monday, November 27, 2023, 09:00 AM**Primary Location:** California Natural Resources Agency Headquarters, 715 P Street, Sacramento, 95814, 2nd floor Conference Room 2-301**Secondary Locations:**

- UCCE Sonoma County, 133 Aviation Boulevard, Suite 109, Santa Rosa, CA 95403
- Ojai Valley Fire Safe Council, 201 Bryant St, Ojai, CA 93023
- Resource Conservation District of Greater San Diego, 11769 Waterhill Road, Lakeside, CA 92040
- The meeting recording may be retained for a limited amount of time, and during that time, may be observed by completing registration at the following weblink. Access to the recording is not guaranteed at any given time. Please see the [November 27, 2023 Agenda](#) for further details.

Webinar Recording Access Link:<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/recording/4955333315616692227>**ROLL CALL****RMAC Members Present**

Chair, Dr. Marc Horney – in person at Ojai Valley Fire Safe Council

Vice Chair, Dr. Stephanie Larson – in person at UCCE Sonoma County

Cole Bush – in person at Ojai Valley Fire Safe Council

Joel Kramer – in person at Resource Conservation District of Greater San Diego

Dr. Paul Starrs – in person at UCCE Sonoma County

Andrée Soares – in person at California Natural Resources Agency Headquarters

Rich Ross – in person at California Natural Resources Agency Headquarters

Bart Cremers – in person at California Natural Resources Agency Headquarters

RMAC Members Absent

Katie Delbar, ex officio member

Lance Criley

Taylor Hagata

Billie Roney

The Board's mission is to lead California in developing policies and programs that serve the public interest in environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable management of forest and rangelands, and a fire protection system that protects and serves the people of the state.

Board Staff

Dr. Kristina Wolf, Environmental Scientist – virtual
Mazonika Kemp – virtual and in person
Deniele Cade – virtual

Department Staff

Steven He, Technical Support – in person

Invited Speakers

Jessica Leonard

Public Attendees

Katelyn Belleville, Michael Byrd, Mary Fiore-Wagner, Margarita Gordus, Anna Mariscal, Edith Martinez, Tracy Schohr, Tal Starostinetsky-Malonek, Katanja Waldner

AGENDA ITEMS and MEETING MINUTES:

Items are numbered by their corresponding number on the agenda and documented below in order of their introduction during the meeting. Times are approximate.

Time: 5:00

1. Call to Order, Webinar Meeting Format, and Roll Call – Dr. Kristina Wolf, Board Staff

See results of roll call, above. Dr. Wolf reviewed the webinar format and functionality.

Time: 9:45

2. Staff/Chairman's report – Dr. Marc Horney, Chair

RMAC Funding

Chair Horney reported that the RMAC is unable to receive any sort of funding due to their being a lack of any formal fiscal mechanism for it to house or spend funds. As such, previous ideas regarding the RMAC applying for grant funding from the Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative (GLCI) or other organizations are not feasible at this time. To receive any sort of funding, the RMAC would have to investigate different avenues, including: 1) requesting funding from the Board of Forestry & Fire Protection (Board); 2) initiating a Budget Change Proposal (BCP); 3) initiating a statutory change that would allocate funds to the RMAC directly; and/or 4) partnering with other organizations that utilize their funding directly in collaborative endeavors with the RMAC.

Per Dr. Wolf, she believes the RMAC Travel Budget is a line item in the Board of Forestry & Fire Protection's (Board) budget, and is \$5,000. Per Member Ross the RMAC could ask the Executive Officer of the Board directly for funding for other activities (Option 1, above). Dr. Wolf has noted that this subject has been broached in the past, but the Board would need to see a concise proposal with details about the amount of funding being requested, how it would be spent, potential deliverables, timelines, etc. Dr. Wolf has put together a hypothetical field tour workshop budget for Ellen Murphy and Doug Turk with the RCD as supporting evidence for a Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) grant that they were applying for and can share this with the RMAC members. Other sources of funding could be from soliciting partnerships and sponsorships from other organizations, and that is what happened for field days last year (Option 4, above).

Resources

- Resources for Option 2 (BCP), above:
 - Instructions for a Writing a BCP: <https://dof.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/352/budget/forms/DF-46-BCP-Instructions-Revised-07-2023.pdf>

- Instructions for a Submitting a BCP: https://dof.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/352/budget/forms/Department_of_Finance_BCP_Form_Submission_Instructions.pdf
- BCP Cover Sheet and Narrative: <https://dof.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/352/budget/forms/DF-46-Cover-Sheet-and-Narrative-Template-Revised-07-2023.docx>

CA RCD Conference 2023

We didn't get accepted for this symposium, but we were offered a virtual presentation in the spring on the originally proposed topic.

CA WFC Panel 10/25–26

In partnership with Ventura County Resource Conservation District and Ventura County Wildfire Collaborative, Coastal Quest hosted a 3-day exchange bringing together a diverse group of wildfire practitioners to focus on understanding, preventing, and recovering from wildfires. Day 1 focused on Planning and Collaboration; Day 2 focused on Solutions and Actions; and Day 3 comprised four different field tour options, including one on “Wildfire Mitigation and Adaptive Management Practices: Prescribed Grazing and Burning”. Members and staff for the RMAC participated in panel Session 6 on Day 2: “Adaptive Management: Prescribed Grazing and Burns”; speakers included: Kristina Wolf (Board), Cole Bush (RMAC, Shepherdess Land & Livestock), Jeff Stackhouse (UCCE), Tommy Winning (CARB). Member Bush reported that the panel discussion was a very truncated experience, lots of information to share in a short amount of time, but she thinks that it was a good collaborative experience, and first time she could talk about prescribed grazing alongside burning, but it was a light touch, and looks forward to spending more time on the subject in future efforts.

Resources

- [California Wildfire Conference Homepage](#)
- [Conference Program](#)
- [Day 2, Session 6: Prescribed Grazing and Burns Session Recording](#)
- [K. Wolf – Prescribed Grazing and Burns](#)
- [C. Bush – Adaptive Management and Prescribed Grazing](#)
- [J. Stackhouse – Prescribed Burning](#)
- [T. Winning – Air Quality](#)

Society for Range Management Conference

It looks like the symposium session submission was lost, so we will not likely be attending this coming year as originally planned. But the conference is coming to California in next couple of years, so we hope to attend then.

Forest and Resource Assessment Program

Rich Walker invited Kristina to be an author on the rangelands chapter of that publication. She will work with their staff on this, and RMAC members will also likely be asked to review the final draft.

Time: 29:00

3. Approval of July 2023 meeting minutes – Dr. Wolf, Board Staff

The draft July meeting minutes were sent out to the RMAC members for their review prior to the meeting. There were no corrections required. Member Larsen motioned to approve the July 2023 meeting minutes as presented; Member Starrs seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Rich Ross	Abstain
Joel Kramer	Aye
Cole Bush	Aye
Bart Cremers	Aye
Dr. Paul Starrs	Aye
Andrée Soares	Aye
Lance Criley	Absent
Dr. Stephanie Larson	Aye
Taylor Hagata	Absent
Billie Roney	Absent
Chair, Dr. Marc Horney	Aye

The motion passes by majority vote with seven ayes and one abstention; the meeting minutes are posted online: [July 2023 Meeting Minutes](#)

Skipped Item 4

Time: 33:00

5. Water Board Regulation of Grazing In and Around Waterways Riparian Grazing Practices – Jessica Leonard, State Water Quality Control Board

Ms. Leonard is the grazing liaison for the State Water Quality Control Board (SWQCB), and reviewed the regional regulatory approaches to address water quality impacts from livestock grazing.

Overview of Grazing in California. About 40% (40 million acres) of the state are covered by rangelands (e.g., grasslands, shrublands, woodlands), half of which are privately owned, and rangelands support the state's surface and groundwater supplies. There are over 13,000 ranches in California. Grazing lands are concentrated in the coastal regions of the state. Federal grazing allotments are concentrated along the mountain ranges along the eastern portion of the state.

History and Current Efforts by SWQCB.

- **1995** – Rangeland Water Quality Management Plans (RWQMP)
- **1996** – RWQMP short course offered online via UC Cooperative Extension
- **1999** – Plan developed for Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program
- **2004** – Policy for Implementation and Enforcement of the Nonpoint Source Program adopted
- **2014** – statewide regulatory efforts began to address impacts from livestock grazing
- **2015 Directive** – statewide efforts discontinued
 - Discontinue because it was apparent that regional differences dictated that regulation should occur at a more local (i.e., regional) scale.
 - Report mandated to analyze the Water Boards' actions around grazing
 - Awarded \$10 million on projects to implement management practices on grazed lands since 2010
 - Complete a draft update of the 1995 RWQMP
 - 2021 – adopted a statewide General Order for Vegetation Treatment Activities that include prescribed herbivory

Trends in Grazing Regulation by Water Boards.

The report mandated by the 2015 directive found that:

- California has a mature, well-developed approach to managing nonpoint source pollution, including from grazing;
- Most regional boards have taken regulatory and non-regulatory actions for grazing since 2015;
- Permitting mechanisms generally are Waivers of Waste Discharge Requirements, and when used, generally focus on specific and significant water quality threats, more sensitive waters, or highly concentrated livestock facilities; low-risk, small operations are rarely regulated;
- Most orders require a Water Quality Management Plan and a Grazing Operations Assessment; and,
- Monitoring requirements have evolved over time in specificity, detail, and rigor.

Regional Water Quality Control Boards.

Water quality standards vary by region and watershed. Watersheds with Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) that include grazing as a pollution source in California have specific pollutant reduction requirements, while some others may designate TMDLs but do not have any associated requirements. Ms. Leonard reviewed all regions in California, including any existing orders, designated TMDLs and specific pollution reduction requirements (if designated), and general approaches (often voluntary and aim to work with ranchers to develop plans and monitoring processes that avoid or mitigate impacts).

Requirements by Region:

- North Coast (Region 1) – Grazing and Riparian Management Plan; Ranch Management Plan; and Monitoring and Reporting
- San Francisco Bay (Region 2) – Orders; TMDLs; RWQMP; Ranch Visits; Compliance and Monitoring Certification annually; and other non-regulatory approaches
- Central Coast (Region 3) – TMDLs
- Los Angeles (Region 4) – TMDLs; database to support ranchers
- Central Valley (Region 5) – Orders only cover irrigated pasture
- Lahontan (Region 6) – Orders; TMDLs; other General Approaches including the Bridgeport Valley Regulatory Approach and the Vision Plan Approach
- Colorado River (Region 7) – Orders; General Regulatory Approach for Big Bear
- Santa Ana (Region 8) – Orders
- San Diego (Region 9) – Orders; General Regulatory Approach

Discussion

- Member Dr. Larson asked about the dairies up in the North Bay area, and if there are any considerations for layering of requirements that are put on producers (e.g., organic requirements, pasture regulations, TMDLs, etc) in terms of forms and other hurdles producers must comply with. Ms. Leonard said that the Board doesn't look at dairies as much because they are not nonpoint sources, but she believes the different agencies do coordinate. Dr. Larson clarified that in Regions 1 and 2, the organic dairies are monitored because they conduct grazing; Ms. Leonard will look into this.

- Member Dr. Horney noted that the RMAC has been promoting the use of grazing for wildland fuels management and asked if the water board's have had any increased concerns about increased interest in grazing for fuels reduction with respect to potential impacts to water quality. Ms. Leonard indicated that the state board has been conducting visits to better understand these practices, and noted that prescribed grazing is covered under the General Order. She noted there have not been concerns about water quality around grazing that she has heard.
- Mr. Kramer asked how the water board interacts with local counties; he noted that at the county level there has been a lot of regulation of livestock grazing and dairies in San Diego. He noted that the approaches to regulation seem so regional across the state, so he was curious how this is coordinated locally. Ms. Leonard will look into this.

Resources

Presentation: [5. J. Leonard - Water Boards Regulations 2023](#)

Potential Actions

- Jessica Leonard, Environmental Scientist, may be contacted at Jessica.leonard@waterboards.ca.gov
- Jeanie Mascia, Nonpoint Source Unit Supervisor, may be reached at Jeanie.mascia@waterboards.ca.gov

Time: 1:23:30 – returned to agenda item #4

4. Expiring Member Terms and New Member Nomination(s): Discussion and recommendations for appointment or term extension of candidate(s) to the RMAC – Dr. Wolf, Board Staff

Terms for Members Ross, Roney, and Soares expire in January 2024, as does Member Hagata's in June 2024.

Member Soares and Member Ross are willing to continue for additional terms. Per Member Ross, Member Roney would be willing to continue as well (Dr. Wolf will follow up with her directly to confirm). Dr. Wolf will need to find out from Member Hagata if he would like to continue on for another term.

Discussion

Member Ross noted that he believes his and Member Roney's terms expire at a different time than indicated; Dr. Wolf will look at the past records to clarify the start dates. There are potential new nominees, if any seats open up, and if seats open, those nominees will be brought to a future meeting. Dr. Wolf clarified that potentially opening seats are for representatives of organizations that represent rangeland owners. Current organizations represented by the potentially-opening seats are the California Cattlemen's Association, the California Wool Grower's Association and the Farm Bureau.

Resources

[4. RMAC Membership and Terms](#)

Potential Actions

- Dr. Wolf to follow up with absent members with expiring terms for confirmation of their willingness to continue on as a member in a new term, or step down.
- Nominees, if any, may submit a Letter of Interest and CV to Dr. Wolf via email.

- If any seats will remain open in 2024 and we have nominees, they will be reviewed at the first meeting of 2024, or thereafter when applications/nominations are received.

Time: 1:29:00 – returned to agenda item #6

6. RMAC 2024 Annual Priorities – Dr. Horney, *Chair* and RMAC Members

Discussion

Member Bush suggested that the Annual Priorities be accepted as is and revised on a rolling basis. Dr. Wolf clarified that the Annual Priorities go into the Annual Report and Workplan, and that needs to be submitted to the Board for approval at the first meeting of the year per the Strategic Plan, so having the Priorities edited on a rolling basis does not meet the RMAC and Board's standard workflow. Chair Horney expressed concerns about deadlines and names being attached to the objectives in the Annual Report and Workplan. Dr. Wolf clarified that dates (deadlines) and leads/contributors for different objectives are NOT included in the Annual Report and Workplan; these are assigned on an internal basis with the RMAC members, and not necessarily published. Chair Horney inquired as to what the 2024 Annual Report and Workplan looks like at this stage; Dr. Wolf clarified that this has not yet been drafted, but will be discussed at this meeting in another agenda item. The Annual Priorities, once approved, will be inserted into the 2024 Annual Report and Workplan; this document is then voted on all at once, and reports on the actions of the RMAC in 2023, and provides the 2024 Annual Priorities and direction of the RMAC in the coming calendar year.

Resources

[6. RMAC Objective Assignments 2023-05-23](#)

Potential Actions

- Dr. Wolf to put the 2023 Annual Priorities into survey format and send out to RMAC members to provide input for the 2024 Annual Priorities.
- RMAC Members to respond to survey and provide input on the annual priorities within two weeks of receipt from Dr. Wolf.
- Dr. Wolf will compile suggested edits, present it at the first meeting of the 2024 year, and a vote can be made at that time.

Time: 1:38:30

7. Updates and Next Steps: Educational Workshop Series 2023/24 – Dr. Horney, *Chair*

Dr. Wolf reminded the RMAC that the topic for the 2023/24 workshop was decided on at the previous meeting and will focus on the impacts of livestock grazing on native flora and fauna. Two RMAC members are needed to volunteer to take the lead on the development of the workshop series. Dr. Wolf noted that 2–5 RMAC members could form an action team for this, but she suggests that it be kept at 3 to avoid potential issues with violations of the Bagley-Keene Act.

Discussion

Member Dr. Larson volunteered to work on this action team, as did Chair Horney. Member Soares and Member Kramer could also assist with connecting the RMAC to speakers, locations, etc). Dr. Wolf will assist with outreach and organization as well.

Resources

[7. RMAC 2023/24 Annual Educational Series suggestions](#)

Potential Actions

Send suggestions for locations, speakers, etc. to Dr. Larson, Dr. Horney, and Dr. Wolf
Kristina.wolf@bof.ca.gov.

Time: 1:43:45

8. 2023 Annual Report and Workplan – Dr. Wolf, Board Staff

We are seeking two RMAC members to work with Dr. Wolf to update the 2022 Annual Report & Workplan for 2023. This document will include the Annual Priorities, which will be a concurrent, but separate effort as discussed in agenda item #6, above. Once produced, the draft will be shared with the RMAC for further input and revision, and we plan to have a vote on the final draft approval at the first meeting of the new year. Ideally the draft would be ready for dissemination to the RMAC members by no later than around Christmas so we can have input compiled and considered by early January so that the final draft should be ready by January 10th.

Discussion

Member Cremers, Member Dr. Larson, and Member Starrs volunteered to work on this action team. Dr. Wolf will assist with updates, compiling revisions, and organization as well.

Resources

[8. RMAC 2022 Annual Report and Workplan](#)

Potential Actions

- Dr. Larson, Member Cremers, and Dr. Starrs will take the first stab at updating the 2022 version for 2023, and will share with Dr. Wolf to send out to the RMAC.
- Once RMAC Members receive the rough draft, respond by no later than January 10. Send edits to Dr. Larson, Member Cremers, Dr. Starrs, and Dr. Wolf at Kristina.wolf@bof.ca.gov.

Time: 1:47:45

9. Updates and Next Steps: Prescribed Herbivory Deliverables – Member Cole Bush

Member Bush noted that the SRM and the American Sheep Industry Association are working concurrently creating prescribed grazing documents and guides to assist graziers in this process; they suggested that we look at what is being done already, and see if the RMAC really does need to produce a technical paper on this. They also suggested that the white paper still be updated, but the RMAC may not need to reinvent the wheel if this is already being done sufficiently in terms of developing technical guidance.

Member Bush noted that members of the Targeted Grazing subcommittee from the CWGA have already started working on updating the white paper. There needs to be some deadlines set so that the RMAC can provide feedback and input at some point in the near future. Member Bush also brought up the literature review, and wants to coordinate with RMAC and academics so that we can ensure a thorough, systematic review of the literature on this topic.

Discussion

Dr. Wolf agrees it makes sense to see how relevant (to California) and comprehensive those efforts other technical guidance efforts are. Dr. Horney noted that California is sufficiently different and complex relative to the rest of the U.S. that it makes sense to develop a technical guide that is explicit for California, and this may extend beyond fuels management over time. Dr. Wolf asked if Dr. Horney was suggesting that the RMAC include ALL potential goals/outcomes outside of fuels management for wildfire mitigation; Dr. Horney clarified that we should focus on fuels for now, updating the white paper with a focus on fuels, and the RMAC may add additional chapters or sections down the road as it sees fit.

Potential Actions

- Member Bush has developed a PDF with the current updates, and will convert that to a Word document for the RMAC to review next, and will share with Dr. Wolf to disseminate for review. They will get us the draft by beginning of December, and the RMAC should send back input by December 31.
- Dr. Horney will solicit graduate students to help with the literature review as well. Dr. Horney will send out a link with a folder to add in resources. He will also invite other colleagues to recruit other students and academics to help with this process.

Time: 2:07:00

10. Oak Woodland CRM-RPF Workshop and Training – Dr. Wolf, *Board Staff*

Dr. Wolf noted that the RMAC will work with YG Gentry of the California Forester's Association to develop a workshop and collaborative training for forestry and range professionals, and the Board may also join a field tour at the same time in May. More information will be forthcoming. Member Ross will be willing to assist in this.

Time: 2:09:00

11. State Lands Grazing License & Land Management (SLGLLM) sub-Committee Deliverables – Dr. Horney, *Chair*

Dr. Horney stated that Member Cremers was working on some sample grazing agreements, and Dr. Wolf would put the drafts into fillable PDF form. There was little progress since the last meeting; the license is about as far as it can go at this stage, and he has some sample leases/licenses that could be used as examples. Member Ross noted that the license template was done, and we were waiting on the Department of General Services (DGS) to review the documents; Dr. Wolf noted that she met with DGS about this, and they provided feedback, and Dr. Wolf will be adding in some minor changes based on those comments in the final draft. Then, once we have the final templates ready and the examples produced, Dr. Wolf would work with DGS to produce a California-specific grazing agreement form that DGS approves and would accept for grazing license agreements with the state.

Potential Actions

- Member Cremers will share samples that we can put into example forms for the grazing license agreement and grazing management plan. The Guidance document is still in its infancy and we need to develop a plan for that.
- Members Ross, Dr. Larson, and Dr. Horney volunteered to assist with creating the examples.

Time: 2:20:00

12. Update on Working Groups or Advised Agencies – Dr. Wolf, *Board staff*

• Natural & Working Lands Science Team

- Charlotte Ely with the Water Board provided a presentation to the team on "[Making Conservation a Way of Life: Implementing AB 1668 and SB 606](#)". They would like any input and feedback on this implementation effort. Link to: [Rulemaking to Make Conservation a California Way of Life](#) and to the [regulatory text](#) specifically.
- Fire Safe Marin's efforts to help residents cultivate "fire resistant and drought-tolerant" yards: [Create a Fire-Smart Yard - Fire Safe Marin](#)

- **Natural and Working Lands Expert Advisory Committee**

- The last public meeting was November 13th, and they provided more information on their recommendations for each ecosystem type.
- You can find meeting materials from past meetings, including recordings and agendas here: [Expanding Nature-Based Solutions \(ca.gov\)](https://www.ca.gov)

13. Updates from Partner Organizations & Public Forum

a. **Legislative Updates**

- SB 675 is in the inactive file due to late major revision requests from CAL FIRE.
- AB 297—which allows for advance payments in the Wildfire Prevention Grants, and defined Prescribed Grazing—Passed and has been signed by the Governor; elements from SB 675 that are present in this bill will be removed from SB 675.
- Goat Grazing Operations AB 143 Trailer Bill (Passed) extended the temporary fix for 2.5 years.

b. **Updates from Partner Organizations**

- California Farm Bureau**
- California Cattlemen’s Association**
- University of California Cooperative Extension**
- California Wool Growers Association**
- California Resource Conservation Districts (CA RCD)**

Member Kramer noted that the Healthy Soils Program through CDFA did not offer funding last year, but did open this year, and funding has been cut significantly this year.

Member Cole, on behalf of the Ojai Fire Safe Council, noted that it did not receive the Wildfire Preventions Grant on its second attempt; as such, it is leading the charge on a community supported grazing effort that raised \$25,000 in two weeks to expand grazing in the valley and introduce education on this topic for grades K–12. The goal is to raise \$100,000, which unlocks a rebate-program model in which private landowners can apply for rebates, and this could make fuels management more accessible in the community.

- Members of the public may address the Committee on any topic within its jurisdiction not otherwise on the agenda. Items will not be discussed in depth but may be agendized for the next committee meeting.***

14. Announcements, next meeting date, agenda items

The next RMAC meeting will be Tuesday Jan 16, 2024 at 12:30 PM in Sacramento, CA.

15. Adjourn