

BOARD OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION

THE NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

KEITH GILLESS, CHAIR

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BOARD OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION MEETING MINUTES

Sacramento, CA

July 26, 2023

BOARD OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION MEMBERS

Present:

- Rich Wade
- Mike Jani
- J. Lopez
- Elizabeth Forsburg-Pardi, Acting Chair
- Dawn Blake

Absent:

- Chairman J. Keith Gilless
- Katie Delbar
- Chris Chase
- Jeremiah Hallisey

BOARD STAFF PRESENT:

- Edith Hannigan, Executive Officer
- Dan Stapleton, Asst. Executive Officer, Foresters Registration
- Jeff Slaton, Senior Board Counsel
- Jane Van Susteren, Senior Environmental Scientist
- Dr. Kristina Wolf, Environmental Scientist
- Anna Castro, Executive Assistant
- Andrew Lawhorn, Forestry Assistant II
- Alexandra La Plante, Administrative Unit Manager

DEPARTMENTAL STAFF PRESENT:

- Matthew Reischman, Deputy Director, Resource Management, CAL FIRE
- Eric Huff, Staff Chief, Forest Practice Program, CAL FIRE

Announcement of Action(s) Taken in Executive Session:

Jeff Slaton, Senior Counsel for the Board reported that during executive session the Board discussed the following matters and no reportable actions were taken.

- California Chaparral Institute, et al., vs California State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (Case No. 37-2020-00005203)
- RCRC vs Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (Case No. 22CECG00123)

07-26-01 Member Wade moves to adopt the Consent Calendar as noticed. Member Lopez seconds the motion.

Roll Call:

Wade:	Aye
Jani:	Aye
Blake:	Aye
Lopez:	Aye
Forsburg-Pardi:	Aye
Chase:	Absent
Delbar:	Absent
Hallisey:	Absent
Gilless:	Absent

Motion passed.

Report of the Chairman, Elizabeth Forsburg-Pardi

Acting Chair Forsburg-Pardi expressed the Board’s sympathies for those affected by the Canadian fires both in the US and Canada. We are all in this together and need to move forward thinking about wildfire as a national and international issue not defined by proximity to the flames.

Report of the Director, Matthew Reischman, Deputy Director, Resource Management, CAL FIRE

Forest Practice Program

- The Program is pleased to report the Forester III-Forest Practice Enforcement Program Manager Position vacancy has been filled by former CAL FIRE employee Cary Japp as of July 17, 2023.

Watershed Protection Program

- 88.5% (54 of 61 samples) of the second round of post-fire salvage Emergency Notice sampling were complete as of July 14, 2023, with more sampling scheduled for the week of July 17, 2023.

Resource Protection and Improvement

Urban and Community Forestry

- Green Schoolyards round one grant awards were announced for 15 applicants to receive \$47 million to work on 100 school campuses. A second round of funding will be announced soon to award an additional \$40 million. A supplemental solicitation may be opened soon to request proposals from non-profit childcare facilities receiving government funding with the intent to award 30 million. The total

\$117 million of Green Schoolyards funding from the Fiscal Year 2022-2023 budget will address impacts of extreme heat and improved student access to healthy outdoor environments and learning.

- A grant proposal has been submitted to the USDA Forest Service to encumber \$43.2 million from the Inflation Reduction Act. One primary deliverable will be subgrants for local projects.

Demonstration State Forests

Boggs Mountain

- Forest Manager Peter Leuzinger has accepted a position with California Forest Improvement Program in the Fresno area and will be leaving his post at Boggs/Las Posadas. Peter has left positive marks on the State Forest Program putting Boggs on a good trajectory for post-fire recovery, recruiting and training valuable employees.

Jackson

- Numerous vacancies at Jackson demonstration State Forest (JDSF) remain unfilled and will continue to be flown, including Forester I in the Research & Demonstration program, Forester II in Research & Demonstration; Forester I in Recreation and Roads; Forester III Forest Manager, Forester I, Forestry Assistant II, and Environmental Scientist (Limited Term) in Research & Demonstration; and Associate Government Program Analyst (Limited Term) to assist with forest administration.
- A Cal VTP has been submitted to support the Fire Fuels Mitigation Study Botany surveys for this project are ongoing and being conducted by Heather Morrison (RCD) with help from Fey Egan.
- Kori Roberts, Nathan Harris, and Kari Bencomo, part of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW's) fisheries biologist staff, continued monitoring and evaluation of salmonid habitat in the James Creek area for follow-up on the James Creek Habitat Enhancement Project and Before-After Control-impact monitoring. Previous surveys covered Gulch C- a tributary to the Noyo River-Fish Passage Improvement Project. Future surveying will cover the East Branch of the North Fork Big River Coho Habitat Enhancement Project post-treatment effectiveness monitoring.

La Tour

- Staff has been focusing on establishing the newly acquired forestlands in the Battle Creek, South Cow Creek, and Pit-Tunnel areas. Public outreach to the local community continues and permanent inventory plots are being established with help from the Biometrics Program.

Mountain Home

- Access to Mountain Home remains restricted to authorized vehicles only due to winter storm damage with no estimated date for the roads to be made safe for public access.

Prescribed Fire and Environmental Protection

Prescribed Fire Program

- The SB 926: Prescribed Fire Claims Fund Pilot Project Program Guidelines is now available for Prescribed Fire and Cultural Burning. There are about 30 individuals both cultural and private burn practitioners that have been registered or certified or

have fallen underneath the pilot claims fund. This covers about 7 to 9 thousand acres of potential prescribe burns that can occur under the claims fund.

- There is a dashboard created to see how the program is providing the needed liability coverage.

Tribal Affairs/Cultural Resources

Cultural Resources Program

- There is a Deputy Director of Cultural Resources position that is currently being flown and will close mid-August.

Tribal Affairs Program

- The 56th Annual California Native American Day will be held on Friday, September 22, 2023, from 10 am to 3 pm at the State Capitol. The theme is “Protecting Our People Through Sovereignty: Past, Present, and Future”.

Wildfire Resilience

California Forest Improvement Program (CFIP)

- The program remains well funded with over \$20 million available for contracts in the 23/24 fiscal year with the sections made every two months until funding is exhausted.

Forest Legacy Program (FLP)

- The Program just released a new project solicitation. Available funds are approximately \$20 million in state funding and \$250,000 of federal funding from the United States Forest Service.
- The initial solicitation for applications closed on July 16th and inviting back full applications on July 28th. They will be due on August 31st and awards should be given by the middle of September.

Climate and Energy Program

Wood Products & Bioenergy

- Issued a press release on June 19 to announce new grant offers in workforce and business development. There was a total of \$16 million dollars that were available for the wood products grants. There were over 14 different projects.

Tribal Grants

- There were \$19 million dollars available in Tribal Grants. Secretary Crowfoot will provide the final approval on the applicates that are selected for funding. Over 20 proposals were received.

Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force

- The next Task Force meeting is August 29. The meeting will be held in the California Natural Resources Agency’s Auditorium and via Zoom from 1pm to 4pm. The agenda will focus on the Regional Resources Kits including a demonstration of a new Interagency Tracking System for acres treated. A panel of regional leaders will weigh in on the Task Force’s Regional Frameworks.
- October 5-6, 2023, Redding: The Northern California Regional Meeting will be hosted by Shasta College. Details and registration coming soon.

Fire and Resource Assessment Program (FRAP)

Forest Health Research Grants

- The Forest Health Research Program received 96 concept proposals in response to our recent grant solicitation. Of those, 37 have been invited to submit full proposals by August 3, 2023. FRAP intends to award up to \$5.5 million in early

September for research projects addressing priority topics in forest health and wildfire management.

Prescribed Fire Monitoring and Research

- A new partnership between FRAP and Chico State University was recently initiated. Work has begun under a 5-year contract to support prescribed fire research and monitoring at the Big Chico Creek Ecological Reserve.
- Numerous successful prescribed burns were completed this spring as part of the California Prescribed Fire Monitoring Program, a partnership between FRAP and the University of California Davis. This endeavor was recently restructured and renewed to provide three additional years of support.

Fire Protection

Aviation Management Unit (AMU)/Tactical Air Operations (TAO)

- Aviation Program representatives will be presenting at this year's Asia Pacific Aerial Fire Fighting Symposium- and Exhibition in Dubbo, Australia August 2-3, 2023, being hosted by New South Wales Rural Fire Service and Dubbo Regional Council.
- The Australia, New South Wales Rural Fire Service Boeing 737, 4,000-gallon capacity is hired and in service as one of our Exclusive Use Large Air Tankers (LAT) for this summer.

Mobile Equipment Program

- 400 new vehicles (mainly pickups) are on the premises.
 - These 400 span three fiscal year purchases due to supply chain issues.
 - Anticipate the delivery of close to 200 more assorted vehicles.
- Davis Mobile Equipment has received the final next gen Mobile Kitchen Unit, the last of 11.

Cooperative Fire Protection

State/Federal Programs

- The FEMA DR-4683 December/January Storms site inspections are taking place at the identified CAL FIRE facilities with storm damage. These agreements with Kern, Los Angeles, Marin, Orange, Santa Barbara, and Ventura counties will contract the six counties to provide initial attack fire protection of State Responsibility Area in place of CAL FIRE.
- As CAL FIRE is considered one of the leaders in Wildland Firefighting and large incident management, other countries continue to contact for assistance in developing their own practices. With the continued outreach with assisting other wildland agencies, we are sending a small contingent to New South Wales. This is in support of the signed MOU from 2022 and includes sending (2) Aviation representatives, (1) Fuels Management representative, and (1) Technology and Systems representatives. These representatives will have the chance to speak about their programs with other representatives of fire agencies from all over the world.

Camps and Crews Program

- The statewide Camps and Crews Program currently has a total of 129 Type I Handcrews staffed and available out of the 233 funded. This total is comprised of 58 out of 152 funded California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) Crews, 28 out of 32 funded California Conservation Corps (CCC) Crews,

29 out of 35 funded CAL FIRE Firefighter I Crews and 14 of 14 funded California National Guard Crews.

- The current CDCR inmate crew population is 938 inmates out of the allocated 2584, leaving the Conservation Camp Program with a shortage of 1646 inmates. The total CDCR Camp Population is at 52% with a crew capacity of 36%.

Safety/Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Program

- The upgrades to our Electronic Patient Care Report program required by the National Emergency Medical Services Information System (NEMSIS) 3.5 update are about 75% complete. The transition is planned for August to meet the November 1, 2023, requirement.
- The next EMS Committee meeting is scheduled for July 11, 2023, in Los Osos. One topic the committee will discuss is new burn protocols and procedures coming to the US based on research from Australia. The new process has seen up to an 80% reduction in burn severity and skin grafts simply by flushing a burn with cool running water for 20 minutes in the first three hours.

Office of the State Fire Marshal

Wildfire Mitigation Advisory Committee

- Met on July 18, 2023, where the Committee Received an update from the Division as well a presentation from the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) on Camp Fire 4 report on Notifications, Evacuations, Traffic, and Temporary Refuge Areas.
- Next Meeting will be held on August 15, 2023, both in person and virtually via Zoom.

Defensible Space Inspections

- Up 379,000 of our goal of 250,000 annually.
- 2023 Burn Permits – 50,977 permits issued.
 - 96% Residential
 - 3% General – 3,879 approved acres
 - 1% Broadcast – 3,224 approved acres
- New policy and procedures are in review.

Wildland Fuels Reduction Reporting

- Wildland Fuels Reduction Reporting as of June 30, 2023. (Final Fiscal Year numbers subject to change after reconciliation)
- Fuel Reduction Projects
 - 591 projects, 118% of the goal.
- Combined Fuel Reduction
 - 72,366 acres treated, 72% of the goal.
 - Unit Projects – 42,786 acres
 - Grant Projects – 26,832 acres
- Prescribed Fire (also counted in fuel reduction):
 - 34,952 acres treated, 69% of the goal.

Wildfire Prevention (WP) Grants

- First year we have a full digital process for solicitation, 248 apps for 400 million in applications. 115 million available to disperse.

Board Comments:

Member Lopez asked where the large aircraft will be housed. Stated he looks forward to seeing the effectiveness of the large aircraft fighting fires.

- Chief stated that it will be housed at McClellan.

Public Comment:

Richard Gienger stated that he is concerned about the long pause in putting together a process for the new management plan at Jackson. It's important to have a real public direct scoping input on management.

- Deputy Director Reischman responded regarding hiring a contractor to help support the JAG and updating the Management Plan is to hire a contractor to give us more bandwidth to support the JAG in developing and rewriting the Management Plan. We are not hiring a contractor to have CAL FIRE write the Management Plan. We are hiring a contractor to support the JAG in updating the Management Plan.

Report of the Executive Officer, Edith Hannigan, Executive Officer, Board of Forestry and Fire Protection**Report of the Standing Committees
Forest Practice Committee, Rich Wade, Chair**

Management Committee, Elizabeth Forsburg-Pardi, acting Chair.

Resource Protection Committee, J. Lopez, Chair

**Report of the Board's Advisory Committee
Professional Foresters Examining Committee, Dan Stapleton, Asst. Executive Officer, Foresters Registration**

Certification of examination results and announcement of successful applicants for licensing as RPF and CRM. Dan Stapleton, Assistant Executive Officer

07-26-02 Member Jani moves to certify as licensed Registered Professional Foresters Examining Committee as fulfilling all qualifications as required under the Professional Foresters Law and certify as licensed Certified Rangeland Managers (CRM) by the California Pacific section of the society of Rangeland Managers. Member Blake seconds the motion.

Roll Call:

Wade:	Aye
Jani:	Aye
Blake:	Aye
Lopez:	Aye
Forsburg-Pardi:	Aye
Chase:	Absent
Delbar:	Absent
Hallisey:	Absent
Gilless:	Absent

Motion passes.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

“Maximum Sustained Production Amendments:” The proposed action allows for consideration of fire risk and fire protection when determining methods for maximum sustain production of high-quality timber products.

- The rulemaking action was brought before the Board in January 2023, and was Noticed for 45-days beginning on June 2, 2023.
- Public Hearing is now opened.

Public Comment:

George Gentry, Senior Vice President, California Forestry Association, thanked the committee for all the hard work they have done. We support this rule.

“Coastal Commission Special Treatment Areas Silviculture Amendments:” The proposed action will result in Forest Practice Rules for Coastal Commission Special Treatment Areas that conform to the existing framework for timber harvest while considering the natural and scenic resources that led to the designation of those areas as Special Treatment Areas.

- The rulemaking action was approved for Noticing by the Board in May 2023. It was noticed for at least 45-days beginning May 26, 2023.
- Public Hearing is now open.

Public Comment:

George Gentry, Senior Vice President, California Forestry Association, thank you to the committee this is a good rule package.

Eric Huff, CAL FIRE, stated that the department is in support of all four rulemakings and comment letters have been submitted to the Board.

Dr. Grey Hayes, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, Education and Program Manager at Swanton Pacific Ranch, Santa Cruz County. Thank you to the committee for this rule package. It is well done. Thank you for working with the Coastal Commission on these great improvements. Cal Poly supports the rule package that accurately reflects the ecological conditions of our forest with the stocking rates.

Nadia Hamey wanted to thank the committee for work on the rule package to update the Coastal Commission Special Treatment Areas Silviculture Amendment is much appreciated.

“Tractor Cable Operations:” The proposed action will provide simplicity and guidance for the implementation and enforcement of regulations governing cable and Tractor Operations in logging activities.

- The rulemaking was brought before you in April of 2023, and was Noticed for 45-days beginning June 2, 2023.
- Public hearing is now open.

Public Comment:

George Gentry, Senior Vice President, California Forestry Association, we support this regulation and would like to single out Jane Van Susteren for all her hard work. Also thank you to your former Regulations Coordinator Eric Hedge who assisted in this effort.

Public hearing on “Ford Definition Amendment”: The proposed action provides common vocabulary describing the crossing types that fall under the definition for “Ford” in the Forest Practice Rules.

- The rule making action was approved for Noticing by the Board on May of 2023, and was Noticed for at least 45-days beginning June 2, 2023.
- Public hearing is now open.

Public Comment:

David Fowler, North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, this was an issue that was brought up by the Water Boards for clarity. The existing language was vague and lead to several lengthy discussions in the field. Thank you to the Board for acting on it. I believe this new definition will take care of the issue that we brought up. We fully support the new wording.

George Gentry, Senior Vice President, California Forestry Association, we support this regulation. Thank you very much to Mr. Fowler for all his help on bring this forward.

CONCLUSION

Public Forum

Public Comments:

No Public Comment.

Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,

ATTEST:



Edith Hannigan
Executive Officer



J. Keith Gilles
Chairman