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## Tree Mortality Task Force Monthly Update February 2018

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The [California Tree Mortality and Reforestation Story Map](#) has been completed. This online resource includes current tree mortality data and an explanation on how the drought, bark beetles and past management practices contributed to the mortality. It also provides valuable information to landowners on the need for reforestation and the applicability of the seed zone map for selecting the appropriate trees. It is available for posting on all partner websites. The Story Map was a collaborative effort between TMTF's Forest Health and Resilience, Mapping and Monitoring, and Public Outreach Working Groups.
- The TMTF heard a presentation from Little Hoover Commission Chairman Pedro Nava and Acting Executive Director Terri Hardy summarizing the findings of the Commission's year-long forest management study. The resulting report, [Fire on the Mountain: Rethinking Forest Management in the Sierra Nevada](#), makes nine recommendations to restore forests back to their historic fire regime. Among the recommendations, it urges the state to take a greater leadership role in collaborative forest management planning at the watershed level. It also calls upon the state to use more prescribed fire to reinvigorate forests, inhibit firestorms and help protect air and water quality. The Commission argues that central to these efforts must be a statewide public education campaign to help Californians understand why healthy forests matter to them and elicit buy-in for the much-needed forest treatments.
- PG&E is providing funding for fuel reduction projects in the Sierra Nevada Region. Their focus is to protect communities from wildfires by providing funding for clearing brush and trees. Fire Safe Councils are invited to apply for funding, with applications due on March 9, 2018. See Partner Updates below for more information.
- The table below depicts the number of trees removed through January 31, 2018.

<u>Area/Unit/County/Agency</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Trees Removed</u>
USFS	Jan-18	507,000
CAL FIRE	Jan-18	43,058
Caltrans	Jan-18	111,233
Priority Counties	Jan-18	26,653
PG&E	Jan-18	382,219
SCE	Jan-18	99,531
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,169,694</b>



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## **UPCOMING MEETINGS and WORKSHOPS**

- The next Task Force meeting will be held on Monday, March 12 from 1:00-3:00 P.M. A meeting announcement and agenda will be posted no later than Friday, March 9 on the TMTF website.
- The following TMTF Working Groups will be meeting in February. Contact [Kristen Merrill](#) for locations and conference call numbers:
  - March 5, 1:30 – 2:30 p.m. – Public Outreach
  - March 7, 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. – Mapping and Monitoring
  - March 7, 2:00 – 3:30 p.m. – Forest Health and Resilience
  - March 12, 3:30 – 5:00 p.m. – Insurance Sub-group
  - March 16, 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. – Regulations
  - March 19, 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. – Market Development
  - March 19, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. – Bioenergy
- The Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program’s Summit will be held March 7. This year’s Summit, “[Taking A Regional Approach to Implementing California’s Climate Goals](#)” will focus on how the Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program is working to retain Sierra Nevada forests as a carbon sink for California.
- The UC Cooperative Extension, Northern California Society of American Foresters, El Dorado County Resource Conservation District, CAL FIRE and the Natural Resources Conservation Service will be hosting a series of one day workshops entitled, “[Replanting after the Trees Die](#),” aimed at landowners, foresters and others who are involved in planning and executing tree planting and reforestation projects. It will also be of interest to personnel working for agencies serving these clients. Reforestation at multiple scales from the residential forest parcel to the landscape will be addressed. Workshops will be held from 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. on the following days and locations:
  - March 7, 2018 at the El Dorado County Resource Conservation District, 100 Forni Road, Placerville
  - March 9, 2018 at the Ambulance, Fire and EOC Facility, 18440 Striker Ct., Tuolumne Rd., Sonora
  - March 16, 2018 at the County Supervisors Board Hearing Room, 5100 Bullion St., Mariposa
- UC Berkeley, UC ANR, and USFS researchers will discuss the results of the 2017 field season for collecting tree mortality data at a [workshop](#) to be held March 12 at the US Forest Service Wildfire Training Center, McClellan, CA. The desired outcomes of the workshop are to: share results of the field season on live and dead trees, bark beetle attacks, regeneration, and fuels; solicit input from partners and managers on useful data summary products; and discuss on-going collaboration on field data collection, interpretation and use.



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## **WORKING GROUP REPORTS**

### **Forest Health and Resilience**

**(Pete Cafferata/ Stewart McMorro)**

- The Reforestation Story Map was updated with the current tree mortality data, was presented to the Tree Mortality Task Force on February 12, and is posted on the TMTF website. The Story Map is available for posting on all partner websites with the link: <http://arcg.is/1XmneG>. It is a “living document” that will be updated as new information and data become available.
- The reforestation strategy project outline is being significantly revised/downsized, with Stewart McMorro acting as the lead on the project and contracting out limited writing assignments. The goal is to produce a short, concise document that provides practical advice on reforestation strategies to landowners. The revised version will incorporate knowledge from field practitioners to create a practical “toolkit” that is easily understood and used by landowners.
- CAL FIRE and UCCE are hosting three reforestation workshops in Placerville (3/7), Sonora (3/9), and Mariposa (3/16). Landowners can register at: <http://ucanr.edu/reforestationworkshop>. Additional workshops are planned for Placer and Fresno counties. Kate Campbell, Forest Stewardship Newsletter editor, is also compiling existing information on reforestation into a short (4 to 5 page) guidance document for landowners.
- The Seed Zone Update Coordination Group, a FHRWG sub-working group, continues to discuss how to best revise the current California seed zone map. The group has received a revised UC Davis/USFS scope of work and budget from Dr. Jessica Wright, USFS PSW for developing climate-based seed transfer guidelines. This contract will inform strategic planning and decisions with regard to updating the seed zone framework for the collection, curation, propagation and planting of tree species in California. The contract for this proposal is expected to be confirmed in February with initial work likely starting in May.
- Work continues on FHRWG’s third white paper addressing the long-term outlook for Sierra Nevada forests following the current bark beetle epidemic. The intent of the paper is to provide a synthesis of current scientific understanding in terms of potential changes in tree species composition, forest structure and extent after the drought and under climate change. Tadashi Moody and Kelly Larvie, CAL FIRE-FRAP, are continuing modeling areas most likely to experience type conversions from mixed-conifer forest to shrub and oak/grass/woodland types without active reforestation efforts. The result of the GIS modeling will inform landowners regarding the general locations where successful reforestation will be most challenging.
- The Sierra Nevada Science Coordination Group, a FHRWG sub-working group, continues to collect data with its online geodatabase developed to document research and monitoring efforts in the Sierra Nevada related to tree mortality. A detailed email requesting input was sent to 60 researchers last fall. The goal of this effort is to catalog all current research efforts in order to identify knowledge gaps and future research needs. To improve our response rate the group produced a brief video to demonstrate the ease of use of the tool and will soon send a second large group email message gauging researcher interest in the project.



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- At the February 14 meeting, FHRWG participants were requested to provide input on what forest health and resilience topics would be most helpful to them. Responses included summarizing and presenting effective reforestation/forest management treatments, providing detailed information on prescribed burning for small landowners, providing detailed information how to meet the goals stated in the 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan and California Forest Carbon Plan, and providing expanded forest health education and outreach.

### **Regulations** **(Matthew Reischman/ Jamie Sammut)**

- The [Guidelines for High Hazard Tree Removal](#) have been updated to reflect the Executive Order from September 1, 2017. This document, and two supporting documents—[FAQ: Contracting for Tree Removal](#) and [Guidance for Tree Service Contractors Conducting Timber Operations](#)—address the licensure requirements under the Forest Practice Act for professionals hired to/seeking to remove dead trees.
- Caltrans, USFS, CALFIRE have met to discuss what is required to streamline Caltrans permitting of hazardous tree removal along highways on USFS parcels. The agencies are seeking to establish standard operating procedures and tracking/reporting requirements.
- The Regulations Working Group has reviewed the tiered-risk evaluation proposal drafted by the Insurance Sub-Working Group with input from IBHS and CAL FIRE. Once final edits are made the document will be presented to the full Task Force for approval as a TMTF white paper.

### **Mapping and Monitoring** **(Mark Rosenberg/ Kayanna Warren)**

- CAL FIRE-FRAP staff have updated the High Hazard Zones Tier 1 (HHZ Tier 1) with the 2017 ADS data and will complete the HHZ Tier 2 updates in March. These will be posted to the [TMTF Viewer](#).
- The Tree Mortality Viewer was recently updated to improve the user experience with new collapsible groups and other improvements. The Mortality Project Tracker (MPM) continues to receive monthly updated project data from USFS, CAL FIRE and other entities.
- MMWG recently updated the map of [Temporary Wood Processing and Storage Locations](#) with locations for temporary wood storage and processing sites, contacts, and hours of operation.

### **Utilization – Bioenergy** **(Angie Lottes)**

- The deadline for concept proposals submitted for grant funding under CAL FIRE's California Climate Investments (CCI)-Forest Health program was February 21. The program received 71 proposals for a total request of \$333 million to treat 724,000 acres. Staff will review the concept proposals for eligibility. Those that meet the Forest Health program criteria to the greatest degree will be requested to submit full project applications that will be reviewed for funding by CCI. Final grant awards are expected to be made in May or June.



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- The Energy Division of the California Public Utilities Commission (PUC) drafted [Resolution E-4922](#), ordering PG&E, SCE, and SDG&E to continue their BioMAT programs under current program rules. The CPUC will vote on the draft Resolution at the March 22, 2018 Commission Meeting. The deadline for written comments is March 12.
  - The CPUC and PG&E have determined that they can run a High Hazard Zone Availability (HHZ) Study. Funding has been secured and the Bioenergy Working Group HHZ Study subgroup will begin working with PG&E to finish a scope of work. The study is meant to reveal HHZ fuel availability as it pertains to BioRAM facilities and barriers to increasing availability.

### **Utilization – Market Development**

**(Evan Johnson/Bob Kingman)**

- The Market Development Working Group received a presentation from the Sierra Institute's Wood Utilization Program Lead Camille Swezy, Camille managed the [Plumas Health and Human Services Center Biomass Project](#) in Quincy. Funded with grants from Sierra Nevada Conservancy and California Energy Commission, Plumas County built the first all CLT building in California which houses a biomass heating system, fueled by wood chips from forest health projects in the county, to provide sustainable heat to the Health and Human Services Center. Locally based crews erected the building in 2 days. [A time lapse video](#) on YouTube shows the construction.
- The Working Group also discussed Sierra Institute's proposal to build a [wood products campus in Crescent Mills](#). This is an example of a replicable project that couples tree mortality treatments with manufacturing at a community scale.
- USFS's Marcus Taylor reported that 119 applications were received nationally for Wood Innovation Grants, with 13 applications coming from Region 5. The projects were skewed toward wood products. Those projects with leverage/matching funds scored better. Final decisions will be made in mid-April.

### **Public Outreach**

**(Daniel Berlant/Staci Heaton)**

- The POWG completed its joint efforts with the Forest Health and Mapping and Monitoring Working Groups on the Reforestation Story Map, which is now available to be promoted, shared, and utilized by all TMTF members (see Forest Health and Resilience update above for link). The POWG is considering potential future collaborative outreach projects between TMTF working groups and partners.

### **Partner Updates**

- PG&E is providing funding for fuel reduction projects in the Sierra Nevada Region. Their focus is to protect communities from wildfires by providing funding for clearing brush and trees. Fire Safe Councils are invited to apply for funding, with applications due by close of business on March 9<sup>th</sup>. Here are the general guidelines:



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- Fuel reduction work should be 75% completed by August 31 and 100% completed by October 1, 2018.
  - Project should be less than \$100k in scope. If scope is over \$100k, provide justification (i.e. project scope summary) for further consideration.
  - Project costs can include administration fees and equipment rental, if necessary. They will consider equipment purchases on a case by case basis.
  - Environmental and all other regulatory compliance is the FSC's responsibility.
  - Funding will be half upfront and the remaining half once the project is completed.
  - Fuel reduction work should be within 1,000 feet of a PG&E electric asset, like overhead electric wires.

Please contact Dana K. Edwards at 925-779-7309, or by email at [VegMgtCEMAFuelReduction@pge.com](mailto:VegMgtCEMAFuelReduction@pge.com), for further information on applying.