



Tree Mortality Task Force

Tree Mortality Task Force Meeting Minutes August 8, 2016

1. Opening Comments

a. Chairpersons (Ken Pimlott)

Ken: Fire season is underway, which has limited the available resources to address tree mortality. Wade Crowfoot is no longer the Governor's Office representative for the TMTF. Keely Bosler is the interim representative.

b. Deputy Task Force Leader (Gabe Schultz)

The Prescribed Fire group is now under the Forest Health group.

2. United States Forest Service Update (Jeanne Wade Evans/Chris Fischer)

Jeanne: An additional \$10 million for projects in specified counties will be available next fiscal year, with a focus on purchasing equipment.

Brittany Dyer: Any restrictions on the additional funding received?

Jeanne: Project areas should be in Tier 1 areas.

A Fire Behavior Analysis Team has been created to help assess what will happen in the event of a fire in the most affected areas of tree mortality.

a. Aerial Detection Survey Flight/Flight Schedule

Updated schedule as of today, Whitney Bray will email it out to the TMTF attendees. This week the surveys will take place on the north coast in the Klamath area, and the southern sierras will be surveyed in a few weeks.

b. District-Wide Tree Mortality Maps

Risk maps and additional information were provided in meeting folders.

3. TMTF Number Validation Process (Gabe Schultz)

Moving forward with any request for numbers regarding tree mortality, both Chris Fischer and Mark Rosenberg will be responsible for coordinating numbers for the Task Force to ensure consistency in data assessment and reporting.

4. Right of Entry Permit Language Update (Jennifer Plescia- Cal OES)

Government Code requires a Right of Entry Permit in order for trees to be felled if CDAA funds are being used. Landowners cannot use CDAA funds to pay for felling trees unless they sign a Right of Entry permit.

5. County reports on additional items for TMTF to address



Tuolumne: County supervisor is providing 80% reimbursement to fell trees along county roads. There is a lot of tree mortality in heavily populated areas, so they are trying to keep ingress and egress roads open.

Madera: Very interested in the hazard mitigation grants that are moving forward.

Mariposa: Supervisors committed to hiring a Tree Mortality “czar” to coordinate all issues regarding tree mortality. Also may have a 20 acre storage site for logs, and moving forward on hazard mitigation grants.

Tulare: Currently working with national forests due to archeological sites along the roads, and working with CAL FIRE to receive additional funding. Tree removal is not allowed on a national monument – working with the USFS to mitigate this issue in regards to tree mortality.

Placer: Still working on the insurance issue, and focusing on the biomass issue – Rio Bravo won't be an option for the County.

El Dorado: Completed all materials for CDAA. Currently prioritizing projects along roads.

Amador: Board has allocated \$500 million for tree mortality, and hiring staff to address tree mortality issues.

Calaveras: Most of the tree mortality in the County is on private land or BLM. What resources are available for private landowners?

Rick Carr: \$11 million is available through CAL FIRE's grant program to help private landowners through grants provided by non-profits and other entities. A press release detailing information regarding how to apply for grants is forthcoming. BLM has also created a group to assess projects on BLM land and prioritize projects pertaining to tree mortality.

6. Working Group Highlights (as time permits)

- a. Mapping and Monitoring (Mark Rosenberg/Chris Fischer)
Currently working on high hazard zones updates and beginning to receive information regarding projects in affected counties.
- b. Utilization – Bioenergy (Kim Carr/Angie Lottes)
PUC filed for approval of contract extensions this morning; would allow bioenergy facilities to receive an increase in price through the end of October. Changes to the BioMAT program for smaller facilities are currently stalled in trailer bill language.
- c. Utilization – Market Development (Evan Johnson/Kim Carr)
CAL FIRE has executed a contract for a study to assess wood product usage in California. The study should be completed in 8-10 weeks.
- d. Regulations (Matthew Reischman/Sandy Goldberg)
Insurance: Working with FAIR plan staff to help understand the coverage options and what homeowners should know.
Storage sites: Reaching out to counties to make sure the group has a list of all available sites.
Air quality: Air curtain burners have federal requirements attached to them, which makes them difficult to get permitted through the local air quality districts. The air curtain burners are currently operating under an 8 week exemption. The group is trying to get a long-term federal exemption and is putting together a draft letter to obtain this extension.



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- e. Public Outreach (Daniel Berlant/Staci Heaton)
The group is trying to obtain correct numbers pertaining to tree mortality numbers and dispersing those numbers consistently. CAL FIRE will also run PSAs regarding evacuations.
 - f. Resource Allocation (Thom Porter/Tom Lutzenberger)
The group is looking into coordinating a grouping of resources in order to maximize usage, potentially through a master plan. The Landowner Assistance subgroup is meeting and their goals have been established. The subgroup is looking into the creation of coordinating with goodwill groups to assist landowners. The group is also developing a State equipment lending program, but this possibility is still limited by a lack of operators for this equipment. It would be helpful to have a coordinator responsible for tracking all equipment and funding at an operational level. The Counties need to finalize all the equipment agreements. The Group will take over updating the “Color of Money” chart.
 - g. Forest Health and Resilience (Pete Cafferata/Stewart McMorrow)
The leadership of the group has changed, and they are looking at a long-term strategy for the group.

7. Closing Comments