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## Tree Mortality Task Force Monthly Update July 28, 2017

### **HIGHLIGHTS**

- TMTF leadership completed the “pulse check” on the TMTF process to ensure its structure, function, and objectives continue to be relevant and valuable and to continue a high level of stakeholder engagement.

The Counties responded that they feel supported by the Task Force leadership and staff, value the opportunities for networking/vetting problematic issues offered by the Task Force, and have found the “products” generated through the Task Force useful. They requested continued support with funding, BioRAM/BioMAT contracts, homeowner’s insurance issues, LTO/contractor issues, equipment, and reforestation. They identified two issues that need to be elevated by the TMTF: help for individual homeowners dealing with dead trees, and woody material and slash left along county-maintained roadways. Finally, they requested future forums (like that sponsored by Cal OES) to foster information sharing among the counties.

The Working Groups responded that the TMTF structure remains valuable, and that interagency, public/private, federal/state/local cooperative relationships, with support from the Governor’s Office and CAL FIRE, are vital to keeping the process moving. They noted that participation in the Working Groups by members ebbs and flows and asked for a renewed commitment by their members to contribute.

- On July 25, USDA-Climate Hub, USFS, SNC, and CAL FIRE sponsored a Science and Management Symposium on “Lessons learned from extreme drought and tree mortality in the Sierra Nevada.” Steve Ostoja, USDA California Climate Hub, will summarize the key messages and proposed next steps at the August 14 Tree Mortality Task Force meeting. Presentations from the meeting can be found here: <http://caclimatehub.ucdavis.edu/drought-and-tree-mortality-science-and-management-symposium/>
- UC Cooperative Extension and UCEE Central Sierra Master Gardeners has created a brochure on replanting after tree mortality aimed at smaller scale landowners in communities that have experienced tree loss. Other localized versions may be created by master gardeners in other tree mortality counties.  
<http://www.fire.ca.gov/treetaskforce/downloads/TMTFMaterials/UCCE%20Central%20Sierra%20Master%20Gardeners%20-%20What%20to%20Plant%20After%20Tree%20Loss.pdf>

### **CURRENT TREE MORTALITY CONDITIONS**

- 102,000,000 dead trees since 2010



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## **UPCOMING MEETINGS and WORKSHOPS**

- The next Task Force meeting will be held on Monday, August 14 from 1:00-3:00 P.M. Steve Ostoja, USDA California Climate Hub, will summarize the key messages and proposed next steps developed at the Science and Management Symposium. Look for the meeting announcement and agenda to be posted Friday, August 11 on the TMTF website.
- The California chapters of the Society of American Foresters is holding their summer meeting August 24-25 in Anderson, CA. Titled "Value Added Forestry," the meeting will explore the latest technology in wood products small scale biomass gasification generators, biochar, cellulose nano materials/nano composites, and cross laminated timber. Attendees will tour SPI's door and window factory and the meeting will conclude with a discussion on community involvement and sustainable communities. <http://norcalsaf.org/2017/07/18/2017-california-saf-summer-meeting-value-added-forestry/>
- The Sierra Nevada Conservancy is hosting free Introduction to Grant Writing Workshops. The two-day intensive workshops seek to build grant writing skills for organizations and agencies in the Sierra Nevada region. They will be August 3-4 in Arnold and August 24-25 in Auburn. [http://www.fire.ca.gov/treetaskforce/downloads/TMTFMaterials/SNC\\_GrantWriting\\_Class\\_Arnold8.2017.pdf](http://www.fire.ca.gov/treetaskforce/downloads/TMTFMaterials/SNC_GrantWriting_Class_Arnold8.2017.pdf)  
[http://www.fire.ca.gov/treetaskforce/downloads/TMTFMaterials/SNC\\_GrantWriting\\_Class\\_Auburn8.2017.pdf](http://www.fire.ca.gov/treetaskforce/downloads/TMTFMaterials/SNC_GrantWriting_Class_Auburn8.2017.pdf)

## **WORKING GROUP REPORTS**

### **Forest Health and Resilience**

**(Pete Cafferata/ Stewart McMorrow)**

- The tree mortality seed zone map was finalized in July and posted at: [http://www.fire.ca.gov/treetaskforce/downloads/TMTFResources/20170626\\_SeedZones\\_letter\\_port.pdf](http://www.fire.ca.gov/treetaskforce/downloads/TMTFResources/20170626_SeedZones_letter_port.pdf). This map is part of the Reforestation Story Map being produced by Heather Williams, CAL FIRE Communications, and Emily Meriam, CAL FIRE-FRAP.
- The FHRWG co-leaders attended the Drought and Tree Mortality Science and Management Symposium on July 25<sup>th</sup> at McClellan. Information obtained from the symposium will be used for (1) the new FHRWG white paper addressing the long-term outlook for the Sierra Nevada continues, and (2) the FHRWG reforestation strategy.
- The Sierra Forest Science Coordination sub-working group is continuing to work on documenting ongoing research and monitoring projects in the high hazard counties. The contact list has been finalized with 44 people to query for information on existing studies related to tree mortality. Liz vanWagtendonk is leading an effort with CAL FIRE FRAP staff to develop an editable web map for capturing the data (i.e., collecting the data in a geodatabase that can be exported to an Excel spreadsheet table from an ArcGIS web map).
- Stewart McMorrow continues to discuss development of the FHRWG reforestation strategy for non-federal forestlands affected by beetle mortality with Dr. Steve Ostoja, Director, USDA California Climate Hub. Stewart and Steve are developing a project outline that can be used by



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the California Climate Hub for generating a prospectus for hiring a postdoctoral researcher to lead the effort.

### **Mapping and Monitoring**

**(Mark Rosenberg/Carly Gibson)**

- As discussed in the TMTF July meeting, USFS will not provide an early release of Aerial Detection Survey data and updated mortality estimates from the first pass of the 10 high priority counties; snow levels were too low to provide an accurate estimate. For more information on the planned update schedule please contact Stephanie Gomes at the U.S. Forest Service.
- MMWG has updated HHZ Tier 2 GIS data with local designations for two watersheds in the Tuolumne River watershed. The updated GIS data are currently available on the TF website.
- MMWG staff continue to update tree mortality project information monthly, based on information submitted by agencies.
- The MMWG continues to provide support to FRWG and POWG in developing a web based 'story map' application and are also addressing edits from TMTF leadership on the Temporary Wood Storage and Processing sites map.

### **Regulations**

**(Matthew Reischman/Jamie Sammut)**

- The Insurance Subgroup will continue working with the FAIR Plan, CAL FIRE and the Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety to discuss the development of standardized insurance risk guidelines that could lead to a tiered evaluation approach for wildfire risk. The group is also working on an "aggregator" tool designed for those seeking insurance. Homeowners can use the tool by inputting their data for review by all interested carriers (admitted and non-admitted) to solicit quotes. This may help homeowners by ameliorating the short-term pain for those now forced to undertake the daunting task of finding a new insurance provider.
- The CalEPA and ARB updated the RWG on the pathways available for a biomass facility to report material from High Hazard Zones (HHZ's) as exempt biomass fuel for purposes of Cap-and-trade compliance. HHZ material that is harvested that was subject to the Forest Practice Act and Rules would be exempt as "forest-derived wood and wood waste." HHZ material collected that was not subject to the Forest Practice Act and Rules can be categorized as "urban waste." The complete analysis will be posted on the TMTF website.
- The RWG is completing a final review of the Guidelines for Tree Removal in High Hazard Zones. Once finalized the guidelines will be reposted to the TMTF website.

### **Utilization – Bioenergy**

**(Angie Lottes)**

- BioMAT Interconnection technical track (Order 10): PG&E system protection engineers have worked with 6 forest biomass BioMAT power plant projects to reduce estimated interconnection upgrade costs by an estimated \$6.5 million. PG&E is working to memorialize these changes so that future category 3 projects will also benefit from the newly identified cost savings strategies and the CPUC is reportedly hiring an Ombudsman to direct these case-by-case savings for future projects.



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- BioMAT Interconnection policy track (Order 10): The working group held an interconnection policy meeting on Friday, July 14. The purpose of the meeting was to review ways to adapt the BioMAT program to enable a number of forest biomass projects to be responsible for lower interconnection upgrade costs. One strategy, to change the limit on reimbursable transmission upgrade costs, was recommended to be pursued by the CPUC. One new issue, termed the "CAISO tariff limit: were also identified and are being pursued by a sub-group of the working group.
  - BioMAT Interconnection policy track (Order 10): The CPUC released a Proposed Decision to partially implement AB 1923 (Wood, 2016). The change will allow forest BioMAT projects to have up to a 5 MW nameplate capacity as long as only 3 MW are exported to the grid. The other half of the bill, which allows existing transmission-level interconnections to be used in delivering power purchased through the BioMAT tariff, is also needed to allow at least 3 additional projects totaling 15 MW to participate in the BioMAT program. Comments on the Proposed Decision will close this week. Reply comments will then be accepted, and if no significant challenges are made to the Proposed Decision, it will be added to the agenda of the next Commissioner's voting meeting.

#### **Utilization – Market Development**

**(Evan Johnson/Bob Kingman)**

- In August, The Market Development Working Group will be hosting a series of conversations with county representatives to determine how the group can best support local efforts to utilize tree mortality woody biomass.

#### **Public Outreach**

**(Daniel Berlant/Staci Heaton)**

- The POWG is continuing its efforts to develop messaging for urban residents, and is reviewing the latest version of talking points related to continued tree mortality despite the end to the drought.
- Work with the Forest Health and Resilience Working Group continues relating to outreach on reforestation and seed zones.
- With the Regulations-Insurance Subgroup, POWG is developing possible outreach strategies related to homeowner's insurance cancelations and non-renewals due to tree mortality fire risk.

#### **Resource Allocation**

**(John Melvin)**

- John Melvin is now leading the Resource Allocation Working Group. John previously led the Landowner Assistance Sub-Working Group which has been absorbed back into the larger Working Group.
- Over the next month, the RAWG will be reviewing the landowner needs survey and the database of potential grants/funding sources to determine how best to organize and use these two sources of information.



## LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- **Local Emergency Proclamations:** Amador, Calaveras, El Dorado, Fresno, Kern, Madera, Mariposa, Placer, Tulare, Tuolumne, Nevada, Siskiyou.
- **County Tree Mortality Task Forces:** Amador, Calaveras, El Dorado, Fresno, Kern, Madera, Mariposa, Placer, Tulare, Tuolumne.

## EQUIPMENT ALLOCATION AND TRAINING

CAL FIRE Tree Mortality Equipment Allocation:											
County Name (CAL FIRE Unit)	Delivered	Kern (KRN)	Tulare (TUU)	Fresno (FKU)	Madera (MMU)	Mariposa (MMU)	Tuolumne (TCU)	Calaveras (TCU)	Amador (AEU)	El Dorado (AEU)	Placer (NEU)
<b>Burner Module A (2):</b>											
3 Fire Box (burners)	6			3	2	1					
1 Track Loader	2			1	1						
1 Wheel Loader	2			1	1						
<b>Burner Module B (2):</b>											
2 Fire Box (burners)	4		2					2			
1 Track Loader	2		1					1			
1 Wheel Loader	2		1					1			
<b>Single Resources:</b>											
Masticator (2)	2			1	1						
Track Chipper (10)	10	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1		
Tow Chipper (6)	6		1	1		1	1	1	1		
Sawmill (5)	4		1	1	1			1			

## TREE MORTALITY RELATED WEBSITES FOR MORE INFORMATION

California's Tree Mortality Information Clearinghouse for Stakeholders

[www.treetaskforce.org](http://www.treetaskforce.org)

California's Tree Mortality Information Clearinghouse for the Public

[www.prepareforbarkbeetle.org](http://www.prepareforbarkbeetle.org)

California's Tree Mortality Viewer

[egis.fire.ca.gov/TreeMortalityViewer/](http://egis.fire.ca.gov/TreeMortalityViewer/)

United States Forest Service-California Tree Mortality Information

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/CATreeMortality>