



Tree Mortality Task Force Monthly Update October 2, 2017

HIGHLIGHTS

- As Monday, October 9 is designated as a Federal holiday we will NOT convene our regular monthly meeting of the Tree Mortality Task Force. The next Task Force meeting will be held on Monday, November 13 from 1:00-3:00 P.M. A meeting announcement and agenda will be posted Friday, November 10 on the TMTF website.
- The Mapping and Monitoring Workgroup welcomes Kayanna Warren as the new co-lead for the MMWG. Kayanna is an ecologist in the regional office of the USDA Forest Service's State and Private Forestry branch.

UPCOMING MEETINGS and WORKSHOPS

- The following TMTF Working Groups will be meeting in October. Contact Kristen Merrill (Kristen.Merrill@fire.ca.gov) for locations and conference call numbers:
 - October 2, 1:30 – 2:30 p.m. – Public Outreach
 - October 4, 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. – Mapping and Monitoring
 - October 4, 2:00 – 3:30 p.m. – Forest Health and Resilience
 - October 9, 3:30 – 5:00 p.m. – Insurance Sub-group
 - October 16, 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. – Market Development
 - October 16, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. -- Bioenergy
 - October 20, 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. – Regulations
 - October 26, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. – Resource Allocation
- TMTF Leadership will host two regional workshops for County staff and local tree mortality task force participants focused on the collective tree mortality response experience. Through presentations and roundtable discussions, lessons learned will be shared on the topics of funding opportunities, tree removal project implementation, debris management, and utilization opportunities. Both workshops will run from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., [October 19 at the Clovis Fire Station](#) and [October 20 at the CAL FIRE Training Center in Inone](#).
- The Sierra Nevada Conservancy is co-hosting a workshop on October 23, 2017 entitled, "[Using Mass Timber in New Construction Projects](#)." Attendees will learn about the structural performance, fire resistance, acoustics, and energy efficiency of mass timber building products. Other topics will include detailing and construction best practices, lessons learned from completed projects and trends for the increased use of mass timber products in the future. The workshop will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Plumas County Fairgrounds.
- The Tree Mortality Task Force is on the agenda at California Association of Resource Conservation District's annual conference November 15-18 in Sacramento. This year's conference will celebrate and highlight "[Dynamic Partnerships, Relevant Results](#)."



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- [California Forest Pest Council's Annual Meeting](#) will be held at UC Davis from November 16 to 17. This year's meeting will focus on, "Responding to Large-Scale Tree Mortality in Urban and Rural Communities."

WORKING GROUP REPORTS

Forest Health and Resilience

(Pete Cafferata/ Stewart McMorrow)

- The Reforestation Story Map has been completed and submitted for the CAL FIRE Executive review process. It consists of 16 slides, as well as supporting videos, weblinks, and concise verbiage. Main topics include drought information, the bark beetle epidemic/increased fire risk, TMTF information, seed zone information, reforestation, and resources available to landowners.
- FHRWG comments and edits for the reforestation and vegetation management strategies outline (version 3.0) have been received and a new version will be produced before the end of September by Stewart McMorrow and Dr. Steve Ostoja. The main subject headings are: background and foundational concepts, strategies, approaches and actions, and resources for managers. The goal is to create a "toolkit" that is easily understood and used by landowners, with quantifiable outcomes and presented in a way that will be understandable and reachable for many levels of landowner sophistication.
- A working draft white paper synthesis on the long-term outlook for the Sierra Nevada was distributed to the FHRWG prior to the September meeting. Information is provided on landownership categories in the mortality areas of the 10 high hazard counties, projected impacts from climate change, and lessons learned from other locations. Still to be completed is a GIS analysis to determine areas most likely to experience type conversions from mixed conifer forest to shrub and oak/grass/woodland types. The goal is to have a complete draft ready for further review completed prior to the October FHRWG meeting.
- The Sierra Forest Science Coordination Group (SFSCG), a FHRWG sub-working group, has developed an editable web map for capturing research and monitoring data being collected in the Sierra Nevada related to tree mortality. The web map allows the researcher to delineate a polygon around the research or monitoring project area; that person is then prompted to enter information about the project. Beta testing for this product is currently occurring prior to sending it to our contact list with 64 people.
- Information on two upcoming prescribed fire training opportunities that will take place in [Butte](#) and [Calaveras](#) counties this fall [Prescribed Fire TRaining EXchange (or TREX)] was provided by Nick Goulette, Executive Director, Watershed Research and Training Center, at the September FHRWG meeting.
- A FHRWG sub-working group is being established to explore how to best revise the current California seed zone map (last updated in the mid-1970's). The Seed Zone Update Coordination Group has had one meeting to discuss options and needs for this effort. A second meeting will take place on Oct 4 where members will hear a presentation by the creators of the Seed Lot



Selection Tool regarding the background data and specific application of the tool in California. Further meetings will focus on evaluation of existing seed zone mapping and the opportunities for updating this considering climate change. The goal of this group is to seek an appropriate update to seed zone delineation through exploration of existing and emerging technologies and science.

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

- The RWG has organized a meeting on October 5 between Caltrans and the State and Regional Water Quality Control Boards to clear up some confusion over the appropriate water quality permitting options for the Caltrans hazard tree removal projects along state highways.
- 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 RWG is updating the Guidelines for Tree Removal in High Hazard Zones and other guidance to reflect the Executive Order from September 1, 2017.

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

- The Mapping and Monitoring Workgroup welcomes Kayanna Warren as the new co-leader. Kayanna is an ecologist in the Regional office of the USDA Forest Service’s State and Private Forestry branch.
- New updates to the Mortality Project Mapper were submitted and are being processed for CAL FIRE, USFS, Placer Co, Tuolumne Co, Tuolumne UD, El Dorado, Fresno, and Tulare RMA. FRAP continues to pull updates designated as ‘public’ from the Mortality Project Mapper to the public TMTF viewer.
- MMWG continues to provide support to the FRWG and POWG in developing a web-based story map application focused on reforestation.
- MMWG recently updated the [Tree Mortality Viewer](#) with locations for temporary wood storage and processing sites. MMWG is also working on a write up of procedures to share with prospective fuel buyers and other entities to identify projects in High Hazard Zones and make contacts to acquire material.



Utilization – Bioenergy

(Angie Lottes)

- BioMAT Interconnection policy track (Order 10): The CPUC has determined that the existing CAISO tariff currently limits reimbursable transmission upgrades to \$60,000 per MW. This limit affects a previously identified method to increase the amount of transmission upgrades reimbursable to BioMAT projects, but does not rule out the opportunity to do so.
- BioMAT Interconnection policy track (Order 10): Projects are awaiting implementation of half of AB 1923 (2016), the part which allows existing transmission-level interconnections to be used in delivering power purchased through the BioMAT tariff. There are no time estimates for this work to be completed.
- BioRAM fuel availability (Orders 9 and 13): Several BioRAM facilities have expressed concern about securing enough HHZ material to meet minimum consumption requirements included in BioRAM contracts with Investor Owned Utilities. A request for funds to complete a third-party assessment of the HHZ fuel market has been made to Cal Fire. At least one potential BioRAM plant is also proposing creative fuel tracking methods for achieving minimum HHZ consumption requirements.

Utilization – Market Development

(Evan Johnson/Bob Kingman)

- The Market Development working group hosted a series of conference calls and interviews with economic development representatives from the counties included in the Emergency Proclamation. The discussions were focused on identifying more specific assistance that the TMTF and this working group could provide to utilize dead trees and stimulate new sustainable markets and business ventures. The results of the calls and interviews are being analyzed to help the working group prioritize future activities and provide maximum value to affected counties.
- The group continues to identify new partners and potential funding sources for grants and loans to support development of new infrastructure. As the group learns of innovative funding or development approaches being used outside of the affected TMTF area, we are sharing information that could be replicated.
- The working group is reviewing membership and attendance at meetings to ensure participation results in rapid communication with partners. Potential additions to the group could help spread ideas and opportunities for utilization and entrepreneurs more efficiently.



Public Outreach

(Daniel Berlant/Staci Heaton)

- The Public Outreach Working Group is finalizing the urban outreach talking points for use by all TMTF members.
- The POWG is also conducting a comprehensive review and update of the 1-Year Review Fact Sheet in advance of the November Task Force meeting to reflect the progress and work that has been done in the past year.

Resource Allocation

(John Melvin)


- The RAWG has reduced and reorganized the [list of potential funding sources](#) to make it more useful for state, local, and tribal agencies and non-profits find opportunities for grant funding for their community or landscape-level projects that may be associated with the tree mortality crisis. This list is not meant to be a source for individual homeowners looking for financial assistance in removing dead trees on their property. We re-organized the list by broad project type including: fuels reduction, natural resource management, market development, landowner assistance, and community projects, and disaster/threat mitigation. The RAWG will develop a list of potential opportunities targeted at landowners. This list will include potential local sources of funding including resource conservation districts, fire safe councils, and others that have been received grant funding for tree removal projects.
- The RAWG performed a review of their objectives and actions to-date. They agreed to focus on three key areas moving ahead: 1) Provide a coordination role for local entities responsible for removing dead or dying trees in HHZ; 2) Continue to be a source of information about available equipment and potential sources of funding and landowner assistance programs; and 3) Coordinate and communicate with the Task Force and other working groups with regards to the allocation of resources as they relate to tree mortality.

PARTNER UPDATES

- Through their [Resilient Communities Grant Program](#) PG&E recently awarded \$100,000 each to the University of California, Merced and the Karuk Tribe of California for projects designed to help communities prevent and prepare for increasing wildfire risk through building healthy and resilient forests and watersheds. University of California, Merced will accelerate the pace and scale of forest restoration in Calaveras County by enabling partnerships focusing on lands that are a high priority for improving drought resiliency and reducing high-intensity wildfire risk, while enhancing both forest health and water-related benefits. The Karuk Tribe will develop a plan for addressing critical infrastructure needs and protections in preparation for implementation of prescribed burns in Humboldt County, working with the U.S. Forest Service and others.



- Caltrans has programmed Emergency Hazardous Tree Mortality projects in the following counties and state highways for fiscal year 2017/18.

17/18 TREE COUNTS		USFS District	RWQCB (Region)	Public Highway Estimate
Counties: El Dorado, Placer (Tahoe Basin) State Highways: 28, 50, 89, 267		El Dorado Tahoe Lake Tahoe Basin	Lahontan (6)	3,184
Counties: Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Tulare State Highways: 41, 49, 168, 180, 190, 33, 43, 46, 58, 65, 99, 119, 152, 155, 178, 184, 198, 204, 223, 233, 245		Stanislaus Sequoia Sierra Inyo	Central Valley (3)	35,000
Counties: Nevada, Placer, Sierra, Yuba State Highways: 49, 89, 174, 193		Sierra Tahoe Plumas	Central Valley (3)	1,270
Counties: Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, Mariposa, Merced, Stanislaus, San Joaquin, Tuolumne State Highways: 4, 5, 12, 16, 26, 33, 49, 59, 88, 89, 99, 104, 108, 120, 124, 132, 140, 165, 201		Stanislaus Sequoia Sierra Inyo	Central Valley (3)	7,397
Counties: Merced, Stanislaus, San Joaquin (Urban) State Highway: 99		(Urban Forest) N/A	Central Valley (3)	5,165
Total				52,016

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)
Burner Modules:											
Air Curtain Incinerators	10		2	3	2	1		2			
1 Track Loader	6		1	1	1			1		1	1
1 Wheel Loader	4		1	1	1			1			
Single Resources:											
Masticator	2			1	1						
Track Chipper	12	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Tow Chipper	6		1	1		1	1	1	1		
Sawmill	4		1	1	1			1			