



**Cal OES**  
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE  
OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

## **Tree Mortality Task Force Weekly Update**

### **April 15, 2016**

#### **HIGHLIGHTS**

- The Regulations Guidance Workshop is scheduled for April 25, 2016 in Mariposa County. A one-page notification document was developed for public notification. Each agency will contribute as necessary to the workshop presentations. Meeting location is the Mariposa County Board of Supervisors Chambers, 5100 Bullion Street, Mariposa, CA 95338 from 10:30 A.M. to 12:30 P.M. The announcement can be found under "What's New" on the Tree Mortality Task Force website.
- A presentation was made to the CWCG Fire Risk Management Group regarding the extent and severity of the bark beetle infestation, as well as the activity of the Statewide Task Force. Additionally, information was shared on the potential effects of the mortality on wildfire for the upcoming and future fire seasons. One key point discussed was the need for a fuels advisory regarding the dead and dying trees for the coming fire season.
- Task Force leadership joined a panel discussion with Yosemite Gateway Partners regarding tree mortality and its potential impacts on visitation to the Park and surrounding areas. An overview of the mortality and state and local response was provided as background to kick-off the discussion and to educate the audience on the unprecedented infestation. The panel included several TMTF members and provided a well round picture of the significance of this topic to the Park and the Yosemite Gateway Partners.

#### **MAIN TASK FORCE REPORT**

- April 11<sup>th</sup> meeting opened with a presentation by CAL FIRE Division Chief Jim McDougald on the work being done in Fresno County to combat tree mortality. Topics of discussed in the meeting included county requirements for a Presidential Declaration, equipment allocation and prioritization to the six affected counties, an update on the CPUC resolution, and the process of including additional transitional counties to the Task Force. The priority counties and the working groups also gave brief updates on their continued efforts.
- The next Task Force meeting will be held on Monday, May 9<sup>th</sup> from 1:00-3:00 P.M.



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## **WORKING GROUP REPORTS**

### **Mapping and Monitoring (Mark Rosenberg/Chris Fischer)**

- The United States Forest Service (USFS) Aerial Detection Survey has been delayed due to inclement weather. This flight will survey mortality in the Sierra Nevada foothills, Tehachapi, and the northern transverse ranges. The flight was originally scheduled for the week of April 11<sup>th</sup>, but is delayed for up to two weeks, subject to having favorable weather windows in which to fly and conduct the survey.

### **Regulations (Matthew Reischman/Sandy Goldberg)**

- The Regulations Working Group continues to work on insurance issues surrounding dead tree removal prior to obtaining coverage, cancellation due to dead trees and variation in underwriting policy.
- The Regulations Working Group continues to coordinate with the counties on storage site development. The counties were asked to provide the working group regulatory or legal issues they are having with any current storage sites being developed. For those counties without storage sites, they were asked to identify a storage site location and begin the development process. With this information, the working group will then be able to better support the counties on any issues they are experiencing.
- Storage Site Case Study: Mariposa County, in cooperation with Caltrans, has initiated a storage site case study to identify site locations and begin the development process. The working group will support this development effort. The group will act as a clearinghouse for storage site development issues/resolutions and will circulate the information to other counties and the task force.
- The Regulations Working Group is working on CEQA issues surrounding state agencies involved in the tree removal efforts and tribal consultations for cultural resources. Caltrans was recently asked by USFS to mark the cultural areas where tree removal will occur. The working group is researching other state agency cultural resource protection efforts and engaging the USFS.
- The Regulations Working Group is evaluating CEQA waiver under the Emergency Proclamation (EP) and procedural efforts (documentation) need by agencies to demonstrate compliance with resource protection statutes for archeological resources, nesting birds, endangered species, etc. CEQA documentation should



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specify that the project is exempt from CEQA because it carries out the EP. Each agency should seek internal legal advice regarding the need to file a Notice of Exemption with the Clearinghouse.

- The Regulations Working Group is working with the Yosemite/Sequoia RC&D Council and North Fork CDC to gain information on their recent storage site development efforts and has requested the current Fire Marshal requirements and the CDC security requirements for the project. The Regulations Working Group wants to compare the requirements to other counties efforts.
- The Regulations Working Group is in the process of developing a FAQ for storage sites, Forest Practice Rules and log utilization.

#### **Resource Allocation (Thom Porter/Tom Lutzenberger)**

- The American Forest Foundation (AFF) began its “4 Touch” direct mail marketing campaign in Mariposa and Tuolumne counties in order to provide landowners information on the California Forest Improvement Program. CAL FIRE Forestry Assistant Specialists will be available to respond to requests from eligible landowners and arrange for a site visit.
- Cal OES requested a California Disaster Assistance Act (CDAA) cost estimate from the four transitional counties (Calaveras, Amador, El Dorado and Placer). There will be a conference call scheduled with all of the counties to discuss the proper methodology to be used for cost estimates. Additionally, it is important that estimates are for eligible expenses associated with CDAA funding.

#### **Utilization – Bioenergy (Kim Carr/Angie Lottes)**

- The CPUC Administrative Law Judge is drafting a decision for the BioMAT program changes for purposes of accelerating contracts for facilities that can receive feedstock from High Hazard Zones.

#### **Prescribed Fire (Nick Goulette/Craig Thomas)**

- The California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA) received a response letter from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) regarding their request for obtaining title V permits for air curtain incinerators. The letter specified that permitting authorities have the option of developing general permits to ease the administrative burden of issuing source-specific title V permits to air curtain incinerators. Pursuant to requirements in 40 CFR 70.6(e), the letter states that permitting authorities may issue a single permit to a source owner or operator for



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multiple temporary locations within any one jurisdiction, and that US EPA are available to help California air districts develop general permits for air curtain incinerators that would meet federal requirements. As a result of Governor Brown's October 30, 2015 emergency declaration, air curtain incinerators operating in California qualify for Subpart EEEE's temporary exclusion provided they comply with the requirements in 40 CFR 60.2969.

## **CURRENT TREE MORTALITY CONDITIONS**

- **29,000,000 dead trees**

## **APPROVED CALIFORNIA DISASTER ACT FUNDING APPLICATIONS**

- **Approved CDAA Applications:** Tuolumne County, Mariposa County, Tuolumne Utilities District
- **Submitted CDAA Applications:** Placer County, Columbia Public Cemetery District, Madera County, Twain Harte Community Services District

## **TREE MORTALITY RESPONSE FUNDING**

- PG&E is awarding \$2 million to local California Fire Safe Councils (FSC) to reduce the increased risk of wildfires due to massive tree mortality in Northern and Central California. The money will be used to protect communities from wildfires in at least 18 high fire-risk counties by clearing brush and dead, dying or diseased trees for the current fire season. The funding will be used for shovel-ready projects in PG&E's service area. This is the third consecutive year PG&E has partnered with local FSCs and provided the grants.
- The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) announced the availability of grant funds through the Pacific Southwest Fuels Management Strategic Investments Partnership. This program is a collaborative partnership between the U.S. Forest Service and NFWF, and will award approximately \$1.9 million dollars over the next year to fuels management projects that will improve forest health and resilience. Project types are described in the Request for Proposals (RFP) posted at [www.nfwf.org/pswfuels](http://www.nfwf.org/pswfuels). Proposal submissions are due **Tuesday, May 17, 2016**.
- California Fire Safe Council (FSC) will begin accepting applications for its competitive application process for 2016 wildfire prevention grants on March 10,



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2016. The application deadline is April 22, 2016 at 5 p.m. PST. FSC has approximately \$2 million available for 2016 wildfire prevention projects.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- **Local Emergency Proclamations:** Amador, Calaveras, El Dorado, Fresno, Kern, Madera, Mariposa, Placer, Tulare, Tuolumne.
- **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)	Eldorado (AEU)	Placer (NEU)
<b>Burner Module A (2):</b>											
3 Fire Box (burners)	6			3	3						
1 Track Loader				1	1						
1 Wheel Loader				1	1						
<b>Burner Module B (2):</b>											
2 Fire Box (burners)			2				2				
1 Track Loader			1				1				
1 Wheel Loader			1				1				
<b>Single Resources:</b>											
Masticator (2)				1	1						
Track Chipper (10)	6	1	2	2	1	1	2		1		
Tow Chipper (6)			1	1		1	2		1		
Sawmill (5)	1		1	1	1		1		1		
<b>Total # of New Equipment Units</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>0</b>

- **Equipment Deployment**  
Equipment is beginning to be deployed and utilized in affected counties. The first pieces of equipment to be deployed are the tracked chippers and sawmill.
- **Equipment Training**  
Training on the operation and maintenance of the wheeled loaders, tracked loaders, and masticators was conducted on April 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>. Each of these trainings featured hands on operation of the equipment and included training from vendor representatives.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- Tuolumne County Office of Emergency Services will be hosting their next Tree Mortality Community Forum on April 19<sup>th</sup>. The forum will provide an opportunity for



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Tuolumne County residents to learn about the County's Hazard Tree Removal Plan, and the coordinated efforts of their area partners. Topics include hazard tree removal, wood yard locations, project area maps, and slash/wood disposal sites. More information can be located at:

<http://www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/6629>

- The next full Tree Mortality Task Force meeting will be held on Monday, May 9<sup>th</sup> from 1:00-3:00 P.M.

### **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/)