



Cal OES
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE
OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION

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Tree Mortality Task Force Weekly Update

April 8, 2016

HIGHLIGHTS

- The Office of Administrative Law approved the re-adoption of the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection's Drought Mortality Amendments. This emergency regulatory action readopts the 1038(k), Forest Practice Rule relating to the harvesting of dead and dying trees related to drought and bark beetle induced mortality.

MAIN TASK FORCE REPORT

- Planning for the entry of additional counties to the six priority counties continues. Invitations were sent to Calaveras, Amador, El Dorado and Placer Counties to attend the next Tree Mortality Task Force Meeting on April 11, 2016. A full report on this topic will be provided at this meeting.
- Remember, the next Tree Mortality Taskforce meeting will be held at **2 PM ON APRIL 11TH**.

WORKING GROUP REPORTS

Mapping and Monitoring (Mark Rosenberg/Chris Fischer)

- Planning is underway by the United States Forest Service (USFS) to facilitate a special early detection flight which will monitor mortality in the Sierra Nevada foothills, Tehachapi and the northern transverse ranges. The flight will survey from the Mount Pinos area north into the southern and central Sierra, concentrating primarily on low elevation pine and oak woodlands. This is scheduled for the week of April 11th, but is subject to having favorable weather windows in which to fly and conduct the survey.
- The Mapping and Monitoring workgroup met with USFS staff to discuss how to best coordinate estimates of dead trees and acres of mortality. USFS and the workgroup have developed a draft reporting format on the amount and extent of mortality, as new survey's for the 2016 season begin. These reports can be delivered to the task force and will be available to assist public outreach staff to answer questions about the amount of mortality. The Mapping and Monitoring workgroup will be the primary conduit for all information related to the number of dead trees and the reporting of other metrics associated with this emergency. Reporting of drought-related tree



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mortality numbers reflects trees killed by drought, bark beetles, woodborers or some combination thereof.

- The Mapping and Monitoring workgroup is working to coordinate project level information on tree removal activities in coordination with the Utilization Bioenergy workgroup. Both workgroups are also participating in development of estimates of biomass. Work is being conducted by the USFS FIA.

Public Outreach **(Daniel Berlant/Staci Heaton)**

- The Public Outreach workgroup has cancelled the dignitary tour in the Bass Lake area previously scheduled for April 15th.
- As part of the "Prepare For Bark Beetle" campaign, three new brochures related to tree mortality and bark beetle have been developed. The educational materials provide background information on the issue and seasonal messaging for the public and actions they can take. The three items include a Fact Sheet with FAQs, a one page flyer and a revised tip card. These brochures are being printed and disseminated out to the CAL FIRE Units.
- CPUC released a FAQs sheet on the E-4770 Resolution and provided it to the Public Outreach group. This will help provide information on a complex and important topic. The FAQs sheet is posted to the TMTF website.

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

- The Regulations workgroup has been discussing the potential to estimate the number of homeowners being affected by tree mortality within the Counties. Mariposa County has developed a GIS methodology that was reviewed and supported by the Mapping and Monitoring workgroup. Some final adjustments will be made to the methodology before circulation to the other Counties for use and the task force for review.
- The Department of Insurance completed the "Home/Residential Insurance and Wildfire FAQs" document to provide information for homeowners experiencing cancellations or non-renewals, Fair Plan information and other pertinent homeowner insurance information. The FAQ document has been posted to the Tree Mortality website.



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- The Regulations Guidance Workshop is scheduled for April 25, 2016 in Mariposa County. A one page notification document is being developed for public notification. Each Agency will contribute as necessary to the workshop presentations. Meeting Location: Mariposa County Board of Supervisors Chambers, 5100 Bullion Street, Mariposa, CA 95338. (Time: TBD)
- The Regulations workgroup 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. The workgroup 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 workgroup 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.

Resource Allocation (Thom Porter/Tom Lutzenberger)

- Training on heavy loader equipment is scheduled for the week of April 11th. Arrival of the heavy loader equipment is scheduled for late April.
- Cal OES and CAL FIRE hosted its first conference call for the Counties to specifically address grant assistance technical support. Experts from both agencies were available to answer questions regarding the current resources that may be available for financial help and what sort of documentation could be required to support an application. The group was also prepared to answer questions regarding the types of documentation that would need to be prepared and maintained in anticipation of federal audits once any federal funds are received or approved.

Utilization – Bioenergy (Kim Carr/Angie Lottes)

- The Investor-Owned Utilities have filed advice letters to the CPUC. This is one of the first steps to approving the RAM auction. CPUC is accepting comments on advice letters for a 20 day period.
- 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 (HHZ).



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- Processes to compile biomass volume estimates for Tier 1 and 2 HHZs have been initiated. Initial estimates are expected to be available for all of the HHZ by the end of this month.

Utilization – Market Development (Evan Johnson/Kim Carr)

- The Market Development workgroup continues to explore export markets for trees killed by drought and bark beetles. There is also a potential outlet for material in the Salton Sea area.
- The National Forest Foundation sponsored report titled, California Assessment of Wood Business Innovation Opportunities and Markets, is a comprehensive report analyzing potential wood business innovations and market within California. The workgroup is exploring opportunities to update this document.

Prescribed Fire (Nick Goulette/Craig Thomas)

- The Prescribed Fire workgroup reaffirmed pushing programmatic and systemic prescribed fire issues onto Fire MOU Partnership workgroups. The working group is discussing potential for a science synthesis to inform best practices and implications of burning associated with areas of high-concentration tree mortality. The Fire Science Consortium could lead a science synthesis on this topic in the next few months.
- The Prescribed Fire workgroup will be submitting a briefing paper to the task force leadership and participants synthesizing their work and the implications for prescribed fire as a tool associated with the task force and affected counties, land owners, and land managers.
- There currently exists a regulatory hurdle associated with moving woody material between air sheds, or from one property to another, to stationary air curtain burners. This issue still needs to be resolved so disposal of wood waste utilizing air curtain burners can be efficiently accomplished. The Prescribed Fire workgroup, the Regulations workgroup and a task force representative from the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA) are working closely to address this issue.

CURRENT TREE MORTALITY CONDITIONS

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



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APPROVED CALIFORNIA DISASTER ACT FUNDING APPLICATIONS

- **Approved CDAA Applications:** Tuolumne County, Mariposa County, Tuolumne Utilities District
- **Submitted CDAA Applications:** Madera County, Twain Hart Community Services District

TREE MORTALITY RESPONSE FUNDING

- Cal OES has approved CDAA funding for Tuolumne County, Mariposa County, and Tuolumne Utilities District.
- CAL FIRE announced it had awarded an additional \$3 million in grants throughout the state for a variety of fire prevention projects aimed at reducing the elevated threat of wildfires due to the ongoing drought and significant tree mortality. The announcement comes just two months after CAL FIRE released nearly \$2 million for fire prevention projects in the counties hit hardest by tree mortality and bark beetle.
- 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. Proposal submissions are due **Tuesday, May 17, 2016**. Details of the program, application information, and submittal deadlines are available through the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's website at www.nfwf.org/pswfuels. In addition, the Forest Service and NFWF will host a webinar to discuss this program on **Tuesday, April 12**, from 12:00-2:00pm Pacific. Webinar details will be available on the website.
- California Fire Safe Council (CFSC) will begin accepting applications for its competitive application process for 2016 wildfire prevention grants on March 10, 2016. The application deadline is April 22, 2016 at 5 p.m. PST. Funding is provided through a master grant to CFSC by the U.S. Forest Service to administer the Grants Clearinghouse program, with CFSC issuing sub-awards to successful applicants for hazardous fuels reduction and maintenance projects on non-federal land, Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP) and other planning or assessment documents; prevention and mitigation education and outreach opportunities for



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landowners and residents in at-risk communities. CFSC 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, El Dorado, Fresno, Kern, Madera, Mariposa, Placer, Tulare, Tuolumne.

EQUIPMENT ALLOCATION AND TRAINING

- 41 Pieces of Equipment have been purchased by CAL FIRE. These include:
 - 10 Air Curtain Burners
 - 10 Tracked Chippers
 - 6 Wheeled Chippers
 - 5 Portable Sawmills
 - 4 Compact Track Loaders
 - 4 Wheel Loaders
 - 2 Masticators
- Equipment Deployment
Equipment is beginning to be deployed and utilized in affected counties. This includes the Air Curtain Burners, sawmills, and tracked chippers.
- Equipment Training
Training for CAL FIRE personnel on the safe and efficient operation of Air Curtain Burners was completed at the end of March in Fresno. Tracked Chipper operation and maintenance was also completed during this time.

Training on the operation and maintenance of the Wheeled Loaders, Tracked Loaders, and Masticators will occur during the week of April 11, 2016. Each of these trainings feature hands on operation of the equipment and includes training from vendor representatives.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Tuolumne County Office of Emergency Services will be hosting Tree Mortality Community Forums. These will provide an opportunity for Tuolumne County



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

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

TREE MORTALITY RELATED WEBSITES FOR MORE INFORMATION

California's Tree Mortality Information Clearinghouse for Stakeholders

www.treetaskforce.org

California's Tree Mortality Information Clearinghouse for the Public

www.prepareforbarkbeetle.org

California's Tree Mortality Viewer

egis.fire.ca.gov/TreeMortalityViewer/