



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

Tree Mortality Task Force Weekly Update January 22, 2016

1. Highlights

- A meeting was held with Tuolumne County officials, CAL FIRE and Cal OES to review the county's operation plan looking at specific treatment plans, plans for hiring project coordinators and tree removal contractors, processing/storage locations, cooperative projects and relationships, specific equipment needs, funding sources, prevailing wage questions. The prevailing wage question and the status of CDAA funding are currently holding up implementation of the Counties operating plan (see status of DIR Prevailing wage and funding considerations).
- How is CDAA being coordinated and allocated?
CDAA funding has not been finalized for approval. Tuolumne County has an approved Tree Removal Plan pursuant to the declared event and has identified their local needs. The County has also identified local resources and reserve funds to leverage against an anticipated CDAA funding approval. However, without CDAA approval, the County cannot move forward with contracts for equipment and personnel. CAL FIRE is providing assistance in the form of resources, equipment, CAL FIRE Crew work funded with SRA Fire Prevention Funds, as well as expediting approval of SRA Fire Prevention Fund grants to eligible participants in the affected Counties. This issue will begin to develop in other counties as Tree Removal Plans are submitted to Cal OES.

2. Main Task Force Report

- Six County Conference Call
On January 14, 2016, a conference call was conducted with the six affected counties and CAL FIRE Units. The goal of the call was to obtain good feedback from the affected areas, establish good lines of communication, and answer questions about deploying resources. A Liaison Group was established including Cara Martinson (CSAC), Staci Heaton (RCRC), Jeff Isaacs (CAL FIRE Southern Region), and Gabe Schultz (CAL FIRE Northern Region). During the call each county was queried to identify organizational structures that are in place to coordinate local resources; whether local operating plans have been developed; identifying what regulatory issues are



Cal OES
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE
OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

preventing work from commencing; and determining how best the Tree Mortality Task Force can assist local efforts.

3. Working Group Reports

Regulations (Matthew Reischman/Sandy Goldberg)

- **DIR Prevailing Wage Applicability**
DIR evaluates projects on a case by case basis when determining prevailing wage applicability. To address the Tree Mortality issues at the high hazard counties, CAL FIRE has provided DIR with specific activities, which they will either give us “guidance” or “ruling”. DIR is committed to addressing these activities on a timely basis. By the mid-to-end of the week of January 25, we should have a list of activities and directions for the counties. As new work activities are identified which are not previously addressed, we will coordinate a DIR response as these are identified, and add them to the list. I envision this activities list with the DIR response will be posted on the Tree Mortality Task Force website. It does appear that to the extent the public works projects are limited to removing the hazard (falling, chipping, removal and decking, etc.) that prevailing wage may not apply. But, we will have DIR provide that guidance/ruling to each activity.
- **Log Deck Watering Requirements**
The Office of the State Fire Marshal, Codes and Regulations developed a guidance document (Information Bulletin 16-003) that can be used by local government fire service for areas dealing with log storage. The OSFM developed the information bulletin through collective input by local fire marshals that have oversight of the storage facilities. The intent of the bulletin is to provide examples of alternate measures and means accepted by the fire authority in order to meet hazards associated with the operation. This bulletin was provided to the Regulations Working Group last Friday and vetted with several county fire marshals and was released today (1/22/16) and can be located at: [http://osfm.fire.ca.gov/informationbulletin/pdf/2016/IB_16-003 - Guidelines for Log Storage.pdf](http://osfm.fire.ca.gov/informationbulletin/pdf/2016/IB_16-003_-_Guidelines_for_Log_Storage.pdf)
- **Guidelines for High Hazard Zone Tree Removal**
A draft guideline for a high hazard tree zone removal document has been completed and is currently in the vetting process. The document is projected to be released next week.



Cal OES
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE
OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

Resource Allocation (Thom Porter/Tom Lutzenberger)

- Status of Equipment acquisition
 - a. 10 Air Curtain Burners ordered on 1/19/16
 - b. 4 Cat 299D2 XHP Tracked Loaders ordered on 1/19/16
 - c. 4 Cat 938M Wheel Loaders ordered on 1/19/16
 - d. 2 Cat 323F Excavators with Advanced Forest Equipment RDM52EX ordered on 1/19/16
 - e. 10 Bandit 250XP tracked chippers ordered 1/19/16
 - f. Orders for sawmills and towable chippers are expected to be placed the first of next week
 - g. A schedule is being developed to capture delivery dates, operations/maintenance training, and deployment dates

- SRA Grants

CAL FIRE has expedited the review and approval of SRA Fire Prevention Fee grants in the six high priority counties. This expedited review has resulted in the approval for funding of 19 grants totaling \$ 1,752,373 dollars for projects addressing tree mortality mitigation within the six priority counties. A list of those projects will be provided within the next week.

- SRA Projects

CAL FIRE has allocated additional SRA fire prevention funding to its Units that cover the six priority counties. 35 projects totaling \$ 507,595 dollars will focus on vegetation treatment projects that help mitigate impacts from tree mortality. A list of those projects will be provided within the next week.

- NRCS Releases EQIP Funds

NRCS advised today in a news release that they are releasing funding through the Environmental Quality Improvement Program for Landowners of non-industrial private conifer forestlands in Amador, Calaveras, Tuolumne, Mariposa, Madera, Fresno Tulare and Kern counties. Additional information can be obtained from NRCS and eligible landowners are encouraged to contact their local county NRCS service center for more information and to apply.

Forest Health and Resilience (Helge Eng)

- American Forests Foundation Meeting

A meeting was held with Chuck Henderson, a representative from American Forests Foundation, and CAL FIRE staff to discuss the possibility of executing pilot projects



Cal OES
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE
OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

to engage non-industrial landowners in critical areas. Items discussed were acquisition of mapping overlay information and identification of priority landscapes to engage in. Once the priority landscapes are identified, contact with landowners can begin in an effort to connect them with resources in the target areas. The objective is to identify projects that can leverage and/or extend from existing efforts to include private landowners on a landscape scale.

Mapping and Monitoring (Mark Rosenberg)

- Field tested a collector application for android based devices to field validate High Hazard Zones (HHZ) produced by FRAP. This will allow the inclusion of HHZs not captured in the initial analysis due to advancing mortality or mapping/analysis errors. Additionally, planning for mapping flights for 2016 occurred with a tentative plan being developed.

Prescribed Fire (Nick Goulette/Craig Thomas)

- Exceptional Events Rule Comment Letter
Northern CA Prescribed Fire Council, Sierra Forest Legacy and UC Extension are coordinating comments with support from leaders at the National Coalition of Prescribed Fire Councils. The Prescribed Fire Working Group will have a draft appropriate for CAL FIRE by Monday.
- Complete analysis of current air quality and burn day trends for San Joaquin and Mountain Counties Air Districts. ARB is collecting data on existing burn days for the working group to work with.
- Working Group will review pile burning backlog and anticipated increase associated with tree mortality. USFS acknowledges a substantial backlog in pile burning already within the 6-county area.
- Direct land managers and relevant landowners in 6-county area to report their anticipated burning (6 month and 12 month) into PFIRS to facilitate more effective planning and burn permitting in coordination with other land managers and air regulators. Develop uniform guidance and leader's intent.
- Use air quality/burn day data and PFIRS data to inform whether and how to provide additional flexibility, streamlined permitting, and/or guidance for smoke permitting.

Public Outreach (Daniel Berlant/Staci Heaton)

- Tour Planning
CSAC, RCRC and other members of the working group who are planning the first legislative tour have pushed back the tour until early April due to snow and weather



Cal OES
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE
OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

uncertainties. The plan is for the first tour to be focused on state legislative members and staffers, since the Executive Order originated at the State level. A tour template is also being planned for development that can then be used for future tours. Tours need to be tracked through the Public Outreach Working Group.

- Website and Toolkit

Earlier this month the Public Outreach Group launched a toolkit with public FAQs, a media kit and many of the different graphics and brochures that CAL FIRE has created. The site can access it at www.tinyurl.com/barkbeetletoolkit. The public education website for the public, as well as the tree mortality viewer is www.PrepareForBarkBeetle.org.

- Public Talking Points

In house talking points have been developed. These provide a good foundation for the task force to build upon. These will be reviewed by the Public Outreach group on the next call. There are separate FAQs specific to stakeholders regarding the role of the task force (<http://www.fire.ca.gov/treetaskforce/downloads/FAQ.pdf>).

- Local Needs Assessment

The group is assessing the needs of the local constituents dealing with the tree mortality issue at the ground level. Specifically the 6 target counties (Tuolumne, Madera, Mariposa, Fresno, Tulare & Kern). Members of the Public Outreach Group will be reaching out to deal with this issue in those areas and assess what the needs are from the task force as far as public outreach and education.

- Short-Term Objectives

- a. Work with other Working Groups to Identify potential future products – Jan 22
- b. Establish toolkit for public outreach materials – Jan 22 (see above)
- c. Develop Public FAQs, talking points and walking piece – Jan 22 (see draft talking points attached)
- d. Determine local needs – Jan 29
- e. Create Self-Guided Tour – Jan 29
- f. Plan State Legislative Tour (Early April) – Feb 5
- g. Analysis all stakeholder materials – Feb 5
- h. Task Force Social Media Procedure - Feb 5
- i. Plan Federal Legislative Tour – Feb 12
- j. Host Stakeholder webinar – Feb 12



Cal OES
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE
OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

Utilization – Bioenergy (Kim Carr/Angie Lottes)

- Extension of Pacific Ultra Power Chinese Camp Biomass Facility
The Bioenergy Working Group has identified the Ultra Power Chinese Camp facility as high priority given its proximity to the tree mortality. As directed in the proclamation, CAL FIRE and others are in discussion with CPUC and the utilities to extend this facilities contract. CPUC has indicated that the high priority facilities should have contracts extended by the end of April, well in advance of Ultra Power's expiration date.