



**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**

### **June 10, 2016**

#### **HIGHLIGHTS**

- On Thursday June 16<sup>th</sup> Tuolumne County supervisors, administrators, Cal OES staff, CAL FIRE staff, and several others visited the Leisure Pines Pilot Project in the Leisure Pines neighborhood off Highway 108 just east of Twain Harte. The project is a collaborative effort involving multiple public and private entities, including Tuolumne County, CAL FIRE, PG&E, Cal Trans, and several other contractors and subcontractors, targeted at providing indirect relief to homeowners as long as trees are threatening county roads and PG&E powerlines are on their property. The work in Leisure Pines is being completed in a three step approach at no additional cost to a homeowner, as long as the landowner signs a right-of-entry permit that allows foresters to inspect dead or dying trees on their properties and the County's partners to come in later and remove them.

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

- The next Task Force meeting will be held on Monday, June 13<sup>th</sup> from 1:00-3:00 P.M.
- An overflight was conducted by CAL FIRE and Cal OES TMTF Leadership to view the level of mortality in the northern region of the State. Areas north of Tuolumne County are experiencing elevated levels of tree mortality; however, the full extent of mortality across these landscapes will not likely be known until later this summer. It is anticipated that mortality will expand in these northern counties.

#### **WORKING GROUP REPORTS**

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

- USFS Aerial Detection Survey data is not yet available. The large geographic area, as well as the difficulty separating older mortality from new mortality, requires significant time and effort to maintain an acceptable level of accuracy. We hope to have updated estimates in the next couple of weeks.
- The tree mortality project tracking application and database are ready to deploy. FRAP staff are working on a package that outlines procedures for new users to acquire login credentials and instructions on using the application or submitting data (for users not working with the application). The CAL FIRE Northern and Southern Regions have identified an outreach strategy and review process for submitted data.



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

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- The Regulations Working Group is working to identify the issues and concerns involved with out-of-state contractors and/or equipment being used to assist with tree removal activities. The interest is to explore developing an Air Resources Board exemption that would allow the use of the equipment. Concerns involve the impact to local and California private contractors and/or equipment.

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

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- Craig Thomas and Nick Goulette spent last week in Fresno County on the Hume Lake Ranger District of the Sierra National Forest with members and affiliates of the Fire MOU Partnership. The group of approximately 35 attendees worked on policy, communications and capacity limitations to increasing the use of prescribed and naturally ignited fires for resource and other benefits. The group also visited sites associated with the Rough Fire (2015), along with viewing and discussing landscapes affected by widespread tree mortality.
- Major outcomes related to the TMTF include prioritizing 1-2 candidate sites within the priority counties for participation in a pilot cooperative prescribed fire training program being developed by a diverse set of partners from across the state. More details on prospective training sites, projects and schedules will be forthcoming as a steering committee is formed and begins work. The pilot cooperative prescribed fire training program is slated to launch this year and run through 2018.

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

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- The Investor-Owned Utilities (IOUs) have filed Supplemental Advice Letters, in addition to previously submitted Advice Letters and Riders, to the CPUC for the BioRAM program. These letters outline the terms of the power solicitation and are one of the first steps for CPUC to approve initiation of the RAM auction. IOUs and facility representatives held four meetings to discuss issues identified from the original Advice Letters, but conversation ceased when it was perceived that agency support for the conversations was less than previously understood. Two parties which had submitted official Dispute Letters in response to the original Advice Letters do not think that the Supplemental Advice Letters address their issues. As such, the Disputes may not be withdrawn and the CPUC will need to officially address them and then issue another Resolution for Commissioner review. This will slow the BioRAM launch process for two months or longer.
- The Working Group continues to compile data to provide an estimate of the volume of trees that will be removed over the next 5 - 10 years and associated costs. This is



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important in order to ensure an adequate amount of facilities and megawatt capacity is available to help manage the trees.

### **Utilization – Market Development (Evan Johnson/Kim Carr)**

- The group continues to pursue the idea of using large quantities of chipped material for dust control and air quality purposes at the Salton Sea. Members of the group met with NFWF to pursue possible opportunities to support movement of tree mortality material by rail.
- Resources, NFF and GoBiz are discussing options for hosting workshop(s) to support wood product business development, focusing on funding.

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

- On Thursday June 9<sup>th</sup> the Public Outreach Working Group hosted a webinar focused on the public education resources available by the various Task Force members. Approximately 400 people were on the call. The recorded version of the webinar will be placed on the Task Force website. The webinar objective was to ensure various stakeholders are aware of existing resources available to them.

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

- A funding priorities document is being developed to provide recommendation and/or guidance to agencies with funding available to apply toward Tree Mortality. The Working Group will report out on the document at the full Task Force meeting on Monday.

## **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, Twain Harte Community Services District, Columbia Public Cemetery District, Pine Ridge Elementary School District
- **Submitted CDAA Applications:** Placer County, Madera County, Calaveras County, Curtis Creek School District

## **TREE MORTALITY RESPONSE FUNDING**

- Legislation for \$10 million in grants from the State Responsibility Area fund passed out of conference committee on Thursday. In the current language,



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a portion of that could be used for tree mortality related work. The funding is subject to completion of the budget process.

- The Sierra Nevada Conservancy Governing Board approved over \$3.2 million in grants for projects that will address tree mortality, reduce wildfire risk, and restore forest and watershed health in the Sierra Nevada region. Additional details can be found at: <http://www.sierranevada.ca.gov/press-room/press-release/press-releases>
- Legislative action continues on the following items:

The Governor's May Budget Revision was released on May 13, 2016 which included a request for a one-time increase of \$11 million General Fund dollars for CAL FIRE to assist in the removal and disposal of trees in high hazard areas. This includes:

- \$6 million for the California Conservation Corps and grants to local entities, including local government, fire districts, local conservation corps, tribal entities, and fire safe councils, to provide support to local efforts to remove hazardous trees that pose a threat to public health and safety.
- \$5 million to support additional miscellaneous equipment, personnel overtime for foresters, hand crews, engine companies, and heavy equipment operators, for hazardous tree removal and fuels reduction efforts.
- The Budget Revision also included a request for \$31.5 million for the Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) to provide assistance to counties through the California Disaster Assistance Act.

## **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:	#Delivered										
County Name (CAL FIRE Unit): >>>----->	V	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	3						
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)				1	1						
Track Chipper (10)	10	1	2	2	1	1	2		1		
Tow Chipper (6)	6		1	1		1	2		1		
Sawmill (5)	2		1	1	1		1		1		
<b>Total # of New Equipment Units</b>	<b>36</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>	<b>0</b>

\*\*Red number denotes that a piece of equipment is in the Unit

- Towable chippers are being licensed and outfitted with fire extinguishers in preparation for deployment to Units.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- The next full Tree Mortality Task Force meeting will be held on Monday, June 13<sup>th</sup> from 1:00-3:00 P.M.



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## **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>**