



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 17, 2016

HIGHLIGHTS

- On Tuesday June 14th Tree Mortality Task Force (TMTF) leadership met with the Amador County Task Force to provide information on the activities of the Statewide Task Force and to gather information on how the State Task Force can help Amador County efforts. The Amador Task Force was well represented by a variety of agencies and there was good information sharing on California Disaster Assistance Act funding, state equipment, PG&E activity, the status and effect of a possible Federal declaration, and the outlook for mortality along with several other topics.
- On Friday June 17th TMTF leadership and other State and Federal agencies participated in a workshop with El Dorado County officials to share information on the many activities going on related to tree mortality. Over 90 people representing the public, utilities, non-governmental organizations, and numerous local, State and Federal agencies were in attendance. Numerous topics were covered including an overview of Statewide TMTF efforts, El Dorado County Task Force response, Eldorado National Forest mitigation and tree removal projects, CAL FIRE and NRCS landowner and forestry assistance programs, PG&E's vegetation treatment program, and a review of the causes of tree mortality in El Dorado County. Following the morning session, attendees travelled to the El Dorado Irrigation Districts Sly Park recreational area where numerous trees surrounding the lake are actively infested by bark beetles. A field lesson on diagnosing tree diseases and insect problems was provided to the group.

MAIN TASK FORCE REPORT

- Calaveras, Amador, El Dorado, and Placer Counties, previously in transitional status, were brought into priority status as of Monday June 13th. They are now full participants in the State TMTF and the State Task Force will include these four counties in the focus of its work to assist local efforts in addressing the tree mortality emergency.
- On Monday June 13th the full monthly TMTF meeting was held. Some highlights from the meeting included a presentation by Trace Riggs and Mike Albrecht from Tuolumne County, along with Corey Peters from PG&E showcasing their collaborative efforts on the Leisure Pines Pilot Project within the county. An update was also provided on the possible Presidential Disaster Declaration, the Governor's Budget, the Congressman Costa workshop, and PG&E, Caltrans, and USFS all provided an update on their current tree mortality efforts. The transitional counties were also officially announced as having priority status.



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WORKING GROUP REPORTS

Mapping and Monitoring (Mark Rosenberg/Chris Fischer)

- The USFS Aerial Detection Survey (ADS) data is still being developed. The large area surveyed and the need to be as accurate as possible are the major factors.
- The Mapping and Monitoring workgroup met with several stakeholders to discuss updates for the asset data used in identifying Tier 1 High Hazard Zones (HHZs). They anticipate getting updated information from partners by June 30th and have tentatively set a goal for updating HHZs before the next TMTF meeting in July (contingent upon receiving updated ADS data by June 30th as well).
- The Mapping and Monitoring Workgroup is developing a full set of processes needed to support project tracking. They anticipate release of the Mortality Project Tracking application before the next TMTF meeting.

Regulations (Matthew Reischman/Sandy Goldberg)

- FAQs-Board of Equalization (BOE)-Timber Tax: Rich Wade has developed the FAQs for Timber Tax. He is awaiting final comment from the BOE and will then circulate to the Regulations Workgroup. The BOE website has more information at: <http://www.boe.ca.gov/proptaxes/timbertextfaq.htm>
- The Regulations Workgroup is evaluating the ability to move hazard trees and debris between sites within Air Districts for treatment in Air Curtain Burners. They are also evaluating issues that may be involved with moving the material across Air District boundaries for treatment.
- The Regulations Workgroup has received comment from CalEPA on the Tree Removal Guidelines and is working on responses to those comments. Overall very few comments were received on the guidelines.
- The Regulations Workgroup determined the use of State/Federal funds to assist private landowners is a question for the funding agency to determine. If the funds support an effort that serves a public purpose rather than a private purpose, it is not prohibited as a gift of public funds.
- The Regulations Workgroup is working to identify the issues and concerns involved with out-of-state contractors/equipment being used to assist with tree removal activities. The interest is to explore developing an ARB exemption that would allow the use of the equipment.



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Prescribed Fire (Nick Goulette/Craig Thomas)

- 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.

Utilization – Bioenergy (Kim Carr/Angie Lottes)

- Tuesday, June 14th California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) approved PG&E and SCE's advice letters which outline the terms for the Renewable Auction Mechanism (RAM) procurement process. A few parties had protested specific terms the utilities included in the advice letters. Through the Bioenergy Workgroup, discussions were facilitated between utilities and bioenergy facilities to try to address these specific issues. Some issues were addressed and utilities revised the advice letters accordingly. However, some issues were not resolved. CPUC has denied the protests and has approved the advice letters. Disposition letters from the CPUC for PG&E and SCE will be posted to the TMTF website.
- On Tuesday, June 14th, CPUC has determined that SDG&E's advice letter does not comply with the BioRAM resolution and has ordered the utility to submit a supplemental advice letter within three business days. Disposition letters from the CPUC for PG&E and SCE will be posted to the TMTF website.

Utilization – Market Development (Evan Johnson/Kim Carr)

- Next week members of the group will be meeting with DGS and a number of State agencies to explore options for using tree mortality mulch in filling State procurement needs. One of the goals of the meeting will be to drive home to other State agencies the need to find a use for this material.

Public Outreach (Daniel Berlant/Staci Heaton)

- On Thursday June 9th the Public Outreach Working Group hosted a webinar focused on the public education resources available by the various Task



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Force members. Approximately 400 people were on the call. The recorded version of the webinar can be found at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ewbt9Dfx5Zo&feature=youtu.be>.

The webinar objective was to ensure various stakeholders are aware of existing resources available to them.

Resource Allocation (Thom Porter/Tom Lutzenberger)

- A subgroup looking specifically at possible assistance for private landowners is being developed. This group will look at both funding opportunities as well as operational actions that might provide help to landowners impacted by dead trees.

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

- 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.



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- \$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.
- SB 826 contains \$10 million in grants from the State Responsibility Area fund. In the current language, \$5 million is being dedicated for tree mortality related work. SB 826 is currently awaiting action from the Governor.
- 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: County Name (CAL FIRE Unit): >>>.....>	#Delivered V										
		Kern (KRN)	Tulare (TUU)	Fresno (FKU)	Madera (MMU)	Mariposa (MMU)	Tuolumne (TCU)	Calaveras (TCU)	Amador (AEU)	El Dorado (AEU)	Placer (NEU)
Burner Module A (2):											
3 Fire Box (burners)	6			3	3						
1 Track Loader	2			1	1						
1 Wheel Loader	2			1	1						
Burner Module B (2):											
2 Fire Box (burners)	4		2				2				
1 Track Loader	2		1				1				
1 Wheel Loader	2		1				1				
Single Resources:											
Masticator (2)	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)	5		1	1	1		1		1		
Total # of New Equipment Units	41	1	8	10	8	2	9	0	3	0	0



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****Red** numbers denotes that a piece of equipment is released to or active in the Unit

UPCOMING EVENTS

- The next full Tree Mortality Task Force meeting will be held on Monday, July 11th 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

California's Tree Mortality Information Clearinghouse for the Public

www.prepareforbarkbeetle.org

California's Tree Mortality Viewer

egis.fire.ca.gov/TreeMortalityViewer/

United States Forest Service-California Tree Mortality Information

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/CATreeMortality>