



Cal OES
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE
OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION

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Tree Mortality Task Force

Tree Mortality Task Force Weekly Update March 11, 2016

1. Highlights

- Air Curtain Burners - Guidance on permitting the air curtain burners has been gathered from the Air Resources Board, Cal EPA, and Federal EPA. Burners may be operated under the direction provided by the Governor's proclamation for 8 weeks without being subject to federal regulations. At the end of 8 weeks they are then subject to Title V permitting but may continue to operate for 12 months while the application is being prepared.
- High Hazard Zones (HHZ) – A draft of the second iteration of the HHZs for the six priority counties has been completed. Work to extend the second iteration state-wide is underway and is nearing completion. The second generation HHZs will be presented at the full TMTF meeting on March 14th.

2. Main Task Force Report

- Six County Conference Call – A conference call was held on the 10th to review the agenda for the full TMTF meeting and to share activities and information amongst the six counties. Some recurring issues gleaned from the call include:
 - No outlet for trees being cut continues to be a hindrance.
 - Keeping operating biomass facilities open and or opening new facilities is a high priority.
 - A common interest in a Federal Disaster Declaration.
 - A lack of options available to assist private landowners who need financial assistance to remove dead trees around their homes.
 - Concerns about homeowner's insurance being cancelled.
- Work Group (WG) Leader Coordination Call – A coordination call was held with the WG leaders to prepare for the full TMTF meeting on the 10th and information was shared between leaders on their respective activities and information they have gathered. Some of those items are captured in the WG Reports below.



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- Due to the scope and scale of the tree mortality throughout the Central and Southern Sierra, as well as the impacts to corresponding State Responsibility Area (SRA) lands, CAL FIRE has recognized the magnitude of this emergency is beyond the ability of affected CAL FIRE Units to mitigate. As a result, the Department is working on a standardized resource ordering process where affected Units can request personnel, crews and equipment from other CAL FIRE Units specific to tree mortality mitigation efforts.

3. Working Group Reports

Mapping and Monitoring (Mark Rosenberg/Chris Fischer)

- See development of High Hazard Zones above

Prescribed Fire (Nick Goulette/Craig Thomas)

- See Air Curtain Burners above

Public Outreach (Daniel Berlant/Staci Heaton)

- Legislative Tour
Plans for the April 15th Legislative Tour are being finalized. A bus will transport attendees from Sacramento to the Oakhurst area where ground and aerial tours are planned to the Bass Lake area. The tour is planned to provide participants a view of the severity and extent of the mortality as well as the hazards it creates and the resulting concerns for life, property, and resources.
- New Brochures
As part of the, "Prepare For Bark Beetle" campaign, CAL FIRE has developed three new brochures related to tree mortality and bark beetles. The educational materials provide background information on the issue and seasonal messaging for what the public should do to mitigate tree mortality and reduce their fire risk.

Regulations (Matthew Reischman/Sandy Goldberg)

- Homeowner's Insurance
A Senate hearing on property insurance and fire hazard/tree hazard issues was held on March 9th. A report prepared by the Senate Insurance Committee was circulated to the Regulations Working Group. Christy Carol (Dept. of Insurance Rep.) is developing an insurance Facts Sheet for Homeowners that will provide Dept. of Insurance contacts for homeowners experiencing cancellations or non-renewals, Fair Plan information and other pertinent homeowner insurance information.



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- **Storage Sites**
The Regulations Working Group is establishing a sub-group to specifically address the issues surrounding storage on private, local, state and federal lands. Additional potential storage locations have been provided to the Regulations Working Group by Caltrans and the USFS. The sub-group will be reaching out to Tuolumne County to learn more about the storage location being established as part of local tree hazard mitigation efforts.

Resource Allocation (Thom Porter/Tom Lutzenberger)

- **Equipment Allocation**
Cal Trans has made application for Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funds for assistance in the removal of trees that threaten Federal Aid Routes. Funding for tree removal on local jurisdiction Federal Aid Routes may be available through Cal Trans's Local Assistance Program.
- **Resource Fair**
A Resource Fair is being planned by Madera County for Saturday April 2nd at Oakhurst Elementary School from 9 AM to 12 noon.

Utilization – Bioenergy (Kim Carr/Angie Lottes)

- **Revised Renewable Auction Mechanism (RAM)**
The RAM Resolution has been published for consideration by CPUC Commissioners during its March 17th meeting. A staff presentation and discussion amongst the Commissioners is expected, as well as a likely vote, unless the item is held. The resolution requires utilities to hold a solicitation for facilities that utilize biofuel from high hazard zones using the RAM procurement mechanism and standard contract. It also allows utilities to enter into bilateral contracts with existing forest bioenergy facilities receiving forest feedstock from high hazard zones.