



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

May 20, 2016

HIGHLIGHTS

- On May 19, 2016 the US Forest Service hosted a congressional tour for several agencies including staff from Senator Boxer and Senator Feinstein's office, United States Forest Service Regional Forester Randy Moore, Sierra National Forest Supervisor Dean Gould, and others. The group attended a field meeting near Shaver Lake to view the tree mortality occurring within the Sierra National Forest and surrounding areas. The group also visited a CAL FIRE project at the Cressman community fuel break and tree mortality clean-up efforts. This project will eventually have prescribed fire treatments as part of the effort and will ultimately tie into Forest Service fuel break work near-by.

MAIN TASK FORCE REPORT

- The next Task Force meeting will be held on Monday, June 13th from 1:00-3:00 P.M.

WORKING GROUP REPORTS

Mapping and Monitoring (Mark Rosenberg/Chris Fischer)

- The Aerial Detection Survey is being conducted this week by the United States Forest Service (USFS). The flight will cover the low elevation forestland along the west slope of the Sierra Nevada Range (below snowline). We anticipate having results to share with the Task Force in two to four weeks post-flight.
- FRAP is developing a web-based mapping tool for agencies to capture and report tree removal project, work locations, and status. This Mortality Project Mapper application has gone through internal testing and is almost ready for release. The user guide is in development and should be complete by the time the application is ready. FRAP will be working with Task Force leadership to deploy these tools to authoritative users in each organization.

Regulations (Matthew Reischman/Sandy Goldberg)

- The draft Contracting for Tree Removal Frequently Asked Questions has been completed. The group commented on 1) distinguishing between commercial/non-commercial timber harvest operations, 2) need to provide linkage to the Regulations Guidance Document and 3) providing a reference to the Agency Contacts List regarding timber harvest permitting.



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- Rich Wade provided the group an update on the Board of Equalization (BOE) Timber Tax Frequently Asked Questions indicating that BOE has a well-developed FAQs document on their website located at:
<http://www.boe.ca.gov/proptaxes/timbertextfaq.htm>
Rich will scale down the BOE FAQs to more specifically address Task Force tree removal issues. The above link will be added to the Task Force website.
- Christa Darlington provided an update on the US EPA letter regarding Title V permitting for air curtain burners. The group is actively working on the permitting issues including negotiations with EPA on their ability to make certain finding of unattainability, concerns surround the need to move the equipment between counties and air districts, and the current definition used by EPA for air curtain burners.

Prescribed Fire

(Nick Goulette/Craig Thomas)

- Craig Thomas, working group co-chair, attended a field meeting near Shaver Lake looking up-close at the tree mortality event on the Sierra National Forest. As part of that trip, spent with Randy Moore, Regional Forester, Sierra National Forest Supervisor Dean Gould, fuels staff and CAL FIRE. We visited the Cressman community fuel break and tree mortality hazard tree clean-up effort that will eventually have prescribed fire treatments as part of the effort. This work will tie into Forest Service fuel break work near-by. Jim McDougald did a great job leading the CAL FIRE portion of the discussion. Plenty of good collaborative work going on in this heavily impacted landscape.
- The Fire MOU Partnership has scheduled their next in-person meeting for June 1-2 at the Hume Lake Ranger District of the Sierra National Forest. RSVP's for the meeting can be sent to either Nick Goulette or Craig Thomas.

Utilization – Bioenergy

(Kim Carr/Angie Lottes)

- The Bioenergy 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 important because it potentially impacts the number of facilities and megawatt capacity available to help manage the biomass from removed trees.
- The Investor-Owned Utilities have filed advice letters and riders to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). 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. Several issues need to be resolved and facility operators, utilities, CPUC, CAL FIRE and other stakeholders are talking these through in hopes to resolve the issues informally. If this is not successful, the CPUC will need to issue a resolution which will slow the process for 2 months or longer.



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- The CPUC Administrative Law Judge released a request for supplemental comments addressing the interconnection issue. Several questions are posed related to the Bioenergy Association of California's proposal which was submitted in prior comments. Comments are due May 25th and reply comments are due June 3rd.

Utilization – Market Development (Evan Johnson/Kim Carr)

- Working group continues to explore the potential to export blue stained logs to China for use as concrete form boards, as well as for chopsticks and coffins. Two export log yards in the Sacramento area debark logs and then ship them. One company is currently removing trees *at no cost to landowners*, and then exporting through the port of West Sacramento. This is a viable option for counties within distances to ports, so north of the Madera/Mariposa county line, and the working group will explore ways to increase that radius. The limiting factor is shortages of trucks and drivers, as well as export restrictions on public logs.
- CAL FIRE is executing a contract for BECK Group to refine their wood product business opportunities study. The revised study will serve two purposes: 1) analysis on opportunities to expand existing wood product businesses or develop new businesses using the feedstock from the tree mortality event in an expedited manner and 2) BECK will utilize its network of forestry and forest products industry contacts to assist in identifying entrepreneurs/developers that are interested in pursuing the opportunities identified in the research phase.
- Continued work on developing an intake pathway with GOBIZ and other agencies/departments for businesses interested in pursuing opportunities related to the tree mortality event.
- The working group continues to work with Department of Water Resources to identify opportunities for high-volume use of wood chips for dust control at Salton Sea. More analysis is being explored to transport chips by way of rail.

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
- **Submitted CDAA Applications:** Placer County, Madera County

TREE MORTALITY RESPONSE FUNDING

- Budget committee hearings were held this week on the following items:



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- 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: County Name (CAL FIRE Unit): >>>.....>>>	#Delivered V										
		Kern (KRN)	Tulare (TUJ)	Fresno (FKU)	Madera (MMU)	Mariposa (MMU)	Tuolumne (TCU)	Calaveras (TCU)	Amador (AEU)	Eldorado (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)				1	1						
Track Chipper (10)	9	1	2	2	1	1	2		1		
Tow Chipper (6)	6		1	1		1	2		1		
Sawmill (5)	2		1	1	1		1		1		
Total # of New Equipment Units	35	1	8	10	8	2	9	0	3	0	0



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- 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 13th from 1:00-3:00 P.M.
- Fire MOU Partnership next in-person meeting is scheduled for June 1st – 2nd at the Hume Lake Ranger District of the Sierra National Forest.

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/