



Tree Mortality Task Force Monthly Update

November 29, 2016

HIGHLIGHTS

- The U.S Department of Agriculture announced U.S. Forest Service has identified an estimated 36 Million dead trees since its last aerial survey in May, 2016 bringing the total dead since 2010 up to 102 Million Trees, with an estimated 62 Million having died since October, 2015 when the Governors Emergency Proclamation was announced.
- The Forest Health and Resiliency Working Group (FHRWG) completed a document titled “Achieving Long-Term Forest Health and Resilience in California.” This document will be posted on the TMTF website. The final version was sent out to the FHRWG on November 22nd.

CURRENT TREE MORTALITY CONDITIONS

- 102,000,000 dead trees since 2010.

MAIN TASK FORCE REPORT

- The next Task Force meeting will be held on Monday, December 12 from 1:00-3:00 P.M.
- The Tree Mortality Task Force was formed for implementing and/or achieving the 19 directives identified in the October 30, 2015 State of Emergency Proclamation by Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. The TMTF accomplishment status of the 19 directives will be discussed at the upcoming meeting.

WORKING GROUP REPORTS

Forest Health and Resilience

(Pete Cafferata/ Stewart McMorrow)

The FHRWG met on November 2th. Progress is being made on several different projects. These include:

- FHRWG will be finalizing a draft document titled “Sierra Forest Health Report”, which outlines the actions needed for comprehensive forest restoration across the Sierra Nevada. Comments on the last draft were due on November 23rd.
- FHRWG completed a document titled “Achieving Long-Term Forest Health and Resilience in California.” This document will be posted on the TMTF website. The final version was sent out to the FHRWG on November 22nd.



- FHRWG is continuing to construct a reforestation strategy for the high hazard counties with extensive tree mortality areas. FHRWG is currently placing a seedling sowing order to make 150,000 seedlings available for sale to private landowners in 2018.
- FHRWG is developing a mapping product that overlays mortality areas with seed zones that will inform cone collection and speculative sowing of reforestation seedlings.
- FHRWG continues to work with the POWG and UC Cooperative Extension on public outreach regarding forest health and resilience.
- A draft list of references regarding bark beetles and wildfire has been developed by FHRWG participants and members.
- FHRWG members will be participating in a new FHRWG/Mapping and Monitoring WG sub-working group to address emerging remote sensing technologies for assessing and monitoring forest health. The goal is to use LiDAR and hyperspectral (HS) imaging to determine dead tree heights and assess potential impacts to nearby assets-at-risk from tree fall.

Mapping and Monitoring

(Mark Rosenberg/Chris Fischer)

- The U.S Department of Agriculture announced U.S. Forest Service has identified an estimated 36 Million dead trees since its last aerial survey in May, 2016 bringing the total dead since 2010 up to 102 Million Trees, with an estimated 62 Million having died since October, 2015 when the Governors Emergency Proclamation was announced.
- MMWG completed a site suitability GIS analysis to build emergency wood storage and processing facilities in Mariposa County. CAL FIRE Unit foresters made requests for additional counties to be completed. As a result, CAL FIRE's FRAP is working on site suitability analyses for Madera, Amador and El Dorado counties.
- MMWG presented the mortality project tracking application at the Sierra Tribal Forum November 15th and has additional presentations scheduled in December at the Sequoia Tribal Forum, as well as at Madera and Fresno Counties.
- The MMWG is developing a seed zone impact analysis to support the FRWG with a seed bank sowing order focused on tree mortality in the hardest 10 high priority counties. This product is expected by December 1st.

Regulations

(Matthew Reischman/Sandy Goldberg)

- **Insurance:** The Regulations Working Group continues to work on insurance issues regarding the significant number of residential and commercial property owners suffering from insurance cancellations, nonrenewals, or declines to issue insurance for recently purchased homes due to wildfire risk. The TMTF counties continue to provide the California Department of Insurance (DOI) with documentation of recent homeowner insurance issues (cancellations, nonrenewals, etc.). The RWG discussed issues surrounding the higher cost of FAIR Plan and an interest to



request information from FAIR Plan on the maximum premiums by county. The RWG will participate in a meeting on November 28 with Verisk to discuss the FireLine model and the potential for data sharing. The RWG and CDI are planning a workshop with the TMTF Counties early next year.

- **Air Quality:** The County Counsel Sub Group has reviewed the Equipment Use Agreement template developed for counties to use the CAL FIRE equipment (ACI, tracked chippers, etc.). The template was circulated and reviewed during the standing quarterly call with the county counsel offices, which happened in early November, comments were received back from the counties on November 16, 2016. CAL FIRE Legal is reviewing the comments and will update the agreement template as necessary.

Resource Allocation

(Thom Porter/Tom Lutzenberger)

Below is an update on the Air Curtain Burners (also called Burn Box) within CAL FIRE's Tuolumne-Calaveras Unit (TCU), Madera-Mariposa-Merced Unit (MMU), Fresno-Kings Unit (FKU), & Tulare Unit (TUU).

- TCU - Working with Calaveras County to determine an expectable site and agreement to utilize County employees to staff the Burn Box Module. If the County can't site (find a suitable location) and/or staff this Module, the Unit will relocate the effort to Tuolumne County.
- MMU - The Unit is working to stand up the Burn Box Module at the North Fork cogeneration site. This site is currently operational.
- FKU - Through the Good Neighbor Authority (once finalized), it is in the plan to site a Burn Box Module in proximity to project work associated with those operations. The County is lacking a site for safe Burn Box Module operation. The Unit is still working with them to find a site.
- TUU - There is one Burn Box located at Mountain Home in conjunction with a TM Sawmill. It is being used to dispose for cull logs, slash, and mill residue. This operation is up and running.
- All Burn Box Modules are accounted for and sited or in the process of being sited for use within the next week or two (if they are not already working).



Utilization – Bioenergy

(Angie Lottes/Sandy Goldberg)

- As directed by the Governor's Tree Mortality Proclamation, the three investor-owned utilities are to purchase a minimum of 50 MWs of power from facilities using feedstock primarily from the high hazard zones. To stay in compliance with the CPUC process and deadlines, PG&E, SCE and SDG&E issued Bioenergy Renewable Auction Mechanism (BioRAM) Request for Offers for forest biomass plants consuming significant high hazard zone material. PG&E and SCE are to purchase a minimum of 20 MWs of power each. SDG&E is required to purchase a minimum of 10 MWs of power. Bidders submitted offers to the utilities in September. In November, the utilities selected the winners and submitted advice letters to the CPUC seeking approval of the contracts.
- In addition to the BioRAM requirements passed by the CPUC early this year, a SB 859 requires 125 MW of additional power procurement from existing power plants. The CPUC adopted Resolution E-4805 to address the requirements of SB 859. IOUs must procure power in the amount allocated to them by executing contracts by December 1, 2016. Contracts can be offered through the current BioRAM (BioRam 1), a second BioRAM (BioRam 2) with specific changes made to the program, or through bi-lateral contracting. SCE and SDG&E have fulfilled their SB 859 requirements through the BioRAM 1 auction, and requested PUC approval for those contracts. PG&E is seeking to meet its requirement through bi-lateral contracts. SB 859 requires the large publicly owned utilities to procure 29 MW of bioenergy. There is no deadline for this procurement, but the publicly owned utilities are working together on joint procurement that is expected to be completed mid-year 2017.
- Because energy procured under SB 859 cannot be obtained by clear cutting, the Forest Service, Board of Forestry and CALFIRE developed a definition of clear cutting for purposes of SB 859, and CALFIRE will be coordinating with the PUC on this.
- CPUC adopted a Proposed Decision to make changes to the existing BioMAT program rules implementing SB 840, which changes the requirements for maintaining a place in the BioMAT queue. Projects will no longer be required to maintain an active position in the utility's Interconnection queue to also hold a place in the BioMAT queue. This will enable several projects to enter the BioMAT queue and trigger the price mechanism. The proposed decision also shortens BioMAT "program periods", which will allow the price to rise and lower more quickly than before. IOUs must issue Tier 2 Advice Letter adopting these changes within 20 days of October 27.
- As directed by the Governor's Emergency Proclamation, the California Energy Commission has prioritized Electric Program Investment Charge funding for woody biomass-to-energy technology development and deployment. Grant Funding Opportunity 15-325 was released



on Monday, June 27, 2016. It includes \$5 million for research and development projects using woody biomass and \$10 million for technology demonstration and deployment to projects using high hazard zone material. Concept papers for this solicitation were submitted and 9 projects passed the phase 1 review and were selected to submit full proposals (due in December). The Commission's phase 2 review and selection of grant recipients will occur between December and March 2017. Additionally, the California Energy Commission has released Grant Funding Opportunity 16-306, part of which makes \$1 million available for reporting on environmental impacts of forest biomass and field residue fueled bioenergy.

Public Outreach

(Daniel Berlant/Staci Heaton)

- The Public Outreach working group has completed the fact sheet recognizing the successes of the Task Force within the first year since the Governor signed the Tree Mortality Executive Order. The document has been approved and is ready for release with the final numbers from the most recent USFS aerial survey.
- The working group is also continuing work on the outreach effort for urban Californians to convey the message of why the tree mortality emergency is important to the entire state. The group is currently amassing materials, data, and other pieces from all the various agencies in the group to be used in the effort.

APPROVED CALIFORNIA DISASTER ACT FUNDING APPLICATIONS

- **Approved CDAA Applications:** El Dorado County, Fresno County, Madera County, Mariposa County, Tulare County, Tuolumne County, Big Creek School District, Chawanakee Unified School District, Curtis Creek School District, Tuolumne Utilities District, Twain Harte Community Services District, Columbia Public Cemetery District, Pine Ridge Elementary School District, Tehachapi Valley Recreation and Park District, Amador County, Placer County, Calaveras County, Halcumb Cemetery District.
- **Submitted CDAA Applications:** Calaveras Public Utility District, El Dorado Irrigation District, & Amador County Water Agency.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- **Local Emergency Proclamations:** Amador, Calaveras, El Dorado, Fresno, Kern, Madera, Mariposa, Placer, Tulare, Tuolumne, Nevada County, City of Grass Valley.



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- **County Tree Mortality Task Forces:** Amador, Calaveras, El Dorado, Fresno, Kern, Madera, Mariposa, Placer, Tulare, Tuolumne, Nevada, Butte, Modoc, Yuba, Lassen, & Plumas.

TREE MORTALITY RESPONSE FUNDING

On Monday, June 27th, Governor Brown signed the 2016-2017 Fiscal Year (FY) Budget. The 16-17 FY Budget includes 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 16-17 FY Budget also includes:

- \$10 million one-time funding in grants from the State Responsibility Area fund, with \$5 million of that being dedicated for tree mortality related work.
- The Budget also includes \$31.6 million for the Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) to provide assistance to counties through the California Disaster Assistance Act.

CAL FIRE Grants update:

CAL FIRE's State Responsibility Area Fire Prevention Fund and Tree Mortality Grant Program received 264 grant applications with a request of approximately \$39 million. The grant applications review process is completed and the award grants will be announced later this week.



EQUIPMENT ALLOCATION AND TRAINING

CAL FIRE Tree Mortality Equipment Allocation:											
County Name (CAL FIRE Unit):	Delivered	Kern (KRN)	Tulare (TUU)	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)	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		

UPCOMING EVENTS

- The next Task Force meeting will be held on Monday, December 12 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>