

**Resource Protection Committee (RPC)**

*The mission of the RPC is to evaluate and promote an effective fire protection system implemented by the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection and improve forest and rangeland health in California.*

**COMPLETED OR SUBSTANTIALLY COMPLETED 2014**

**1. Forest Fire Prevention Exemption Pilot Project (14 CCR § 1038) AB 744**

**Objective:** *It is the intent of the Legislature to establish a five-year pilot project to assess whether increasing the diameter of trees that may be removed pursuant to the existing Forest Fire Prevention Exemption in the Z'berg-Nejedly Forest Practice Act can reduce the risk of catastrophic fire that threatens many communities in the Sierra Nevada while improving the economic use of this exemption for landowners.*

**Status:** Rulemaking complete. Monitoring component under development.

**2. Update of Title 14 CCR 1270 Regulations (Fire Safe), PRC 4290/4291.**

**Objective:** *Revise SRA Fire Safe regulations. These regulations provide wildfire protection standards association with residential subdivision development.*

**Status:** Rulemaking complete, Cal Poly Study for traffic underway.

**PRIORITY 1:**

**3. State Responsibility Area 5 year review, PRC 4125.**

**Objective:** *Every 5 years the Board shall: “.. classify all lands within the state, without regard to any classification of lands made by or for any federal agency or purpose, for the purpose of determining areas in which the financial responsibility of preventing and suppressing fires is primarily the responsibility of the state. The prevention and suppression of fires in all areas that are not so classified is primarily the responsibility of local or federal agencies, as the case may be.”*

**Status:** Ongoing, complete by 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 2015.

**4. Committee on Criminal Trespass: The purpose of the committee is the examination of policies and practices toward illegal drug growing in California's forest.**

**Objective:** *Follow up the Board's symposium with a report and issue a paper on its findings*

5. **Safety Element Review (all counties, cities with VHFHSZ)**

**Objective:** Review ongoing general plans submitted.

**Status:** Submission of GP recommendations to counties ongoing.

6. **Vegetation treatment plan EIR.**

**Objective:** In 2005 the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (Board) initiated preparation of an updated Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) for the Vegetation Management Program administered by the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Department). The original 1981 PEIR applied only to the use of prescribed fire on private land within state fire protection responsibility areas. It became clear that implementation of an effective vegetation management program to reduce the risk of large damaging wildfires would need to cover a wider range of land ownerships and utilize a wider range of tools for vegetation treatment than prescribed fire. The Board adopted a new California Fire Plan in 1996 that relied on expansion of vegetation management treatments (land and tools) to reduce the large wildfire risk. The Department then prepared and certified a revised PEIR for vegetation management in 2000. The PEIR was subsequently decertified 2002 as directed by a superior court decision. The court found that the use of herbicides for vegetation treatment was not adequately addressed in the PEIR.

In 2005 SB 1804 broadened the range of vegetation treatment practices described in Public Resources Code. The Board then began work on preparation of the current PEIR which does cover a wider range of vegetation treatments and broader range of land ownerships (non-federal public lands). With this change the title of the PEIR was changed to the Vegetation Treatment Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (VTPEIR). Scoping sessions for this effort were conducted in August of 2005 and work began on preparation of a Draft EIR, but was delayed due to staffing and funding constraints. Since that time the Board adopted a new 2010 California Fire Plan which is risk based.

**Status:** Draft EIR under review.

**PRIORITY 2:**

7. **Blue Book Staffing Review**

**Objective:** To provide basic fire protection for CAL FIRE Direct Protection Area the Department has developed a Fire Protection Plan, which undergoes approval by the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection. The Plan includes a listing of proposed and existing fire protection companies and stations and related staffing standards.

“PRC 4130 states: The board shall classify all lands within state responsibility areas into types of land based on cover, beneficial use of water from watersheds, probable damage from erosion, and fire risks and hazards, and shall determine the intensity of protection to be given to each such type of land. A plan for adequate statewide fire protection of state responsibility areas shall be prepared by the board in which all land of

*each type shall be assigned the same intensity of protection, and the estimated cost of such intensity of protection shall be determined.”*

*Board should request a presentation from the Department on this issue.*

**8. Section 4210, et seq. of the Public Resources Code imposes an annual “State Responsibility Area Fire Prevention Fee.”**

**Objective:** *Develop regulations to make specific AB X1 29, Chapter 741, Statutes of 2011.*

**Status:** The Board adopted emergency regulations and later the permanent regulations in 2011 and 2012. This fee is to be paid by individual owners of habitable structures located on lands that lie within a designated State Responsibility Area (SRA). The Board designates SRA boundaries pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 4102. SRA lands roughly correspond to areas that are covered in timber and other vegetation, or contiguous rangelands, which provide watershed value. They do not include areas within federal ownership or within incorporated cities. Although the Legislature has not yet appropriated funds for local assistance grants, the Board, by Public Resources Code:

*“ shall establish a local assistance grant program for fire prevention activities designed to benefit structures within state responsibility areas, including public education, that are provided by counties and other local agencies, including special districts, with state responsibility areas within their jurisdictions.”*

**9. Utility Vegetation Clearing Standards**

**Objective:** *Track CALFIRE Monitoring of performance of major woody stem exemption; review CPUC on new vegetation clearing standards and adopt permanent clearing regulation.*

**Status:** On December 6, 2011, the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection adopted amendments to the Fire Prevention Standards for Electrical Utility in Title 14 CCR, Division 1.5, Chapter 7 Fire Protection, and Article 4. The regulation provides an exemption to the utility vegetation clearing requirements in Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, Section 1257(a)(3), and defines the term “Hazard Tree” in Section 1257(b). The exemption allows for healthy, mature trees (trunks and limbs commonly referred to as “Major Woody Stems” or identified by the acronym “MWS”), sufficiently rigid so they do not present a risk to public safety, to be closer to powerlines than the minimum clearing distance under existing regulations.

**10. Forest Pest Council**

**Objective:** *Continue monitoring issues. Current Priorities are:  
Sudden Oak Death (SOD)  
Goldspotted oak borer (GSOB)  
Polyphagus Shot Hole Borer*

**Status:** Ongoing review in 2014.

**11. California Fire Plan**

**Objective:** *Review on-going implementation of final Plan adopted in June 2010.*

**Status:** quarterly reports being received.

**PRIORITY 3:**

**12. Technical Rule Addendum No. 4, Minimum Distances Require by Law, Fire Safe THP Vegetation Treatment**

**Objective/Status:** The Department has request that the Board amend the diagram in technical rule addendum No. 4 to accurately portray the vegetation treatments as required by PRC § 4291(b) and 14 CCR § 1299(a)(2). No progress to date.

**13. AB 32 GHG issue: *The Board of Forestry and Fire Protection, working with the Resources Agency, the Air Resources Board, and the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection will assess future climate impacts that will exacerbate existing wildfire and pest problems in the Forest sector. These problems will create new uncertainties in reducing emissions and maintaining sequestration levels over the long-term requiring more creative strategies for adapting to these changes. In the short term, focusing on sustainable management practices and land-use issues is a practical approach for moving forward.***

**14. Nursery/Seed Bank Update**