BOARD OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION MEETING MINUTES

SACRAMENTO, CA

January 22, 2025

**BOARD OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION MEMBERS**

**Present:**

* Terrence O’Brien, Chair
* Elizabeth Forsburg-Pardi, Vice Chair
* J. Lopez
* Rich Wade
* Dawn Blake
* Ali Jahangiri
* Elicia Goldsworthy
* Ryan Hilburn

**Absent:**

* Katie Delbar

**BOARD STAFF PRESENT:**

* Edith Hannigan, Executive Officer
* Dan Stapleton, Asst. Executive Officer, Foresters Registration
* Jeff Slaton, Senior Board Counsel
* Robert Roth, Board Counsel
* Dan Craig, Regulations Program Manager
* Jane Van Susteren, Regulations Coordinator
* Andrew Lawhorn, Forestry Assistant II
* Kristina Wolf, Senior Environmental Scientist
* Alexandra La Plante, Administrative Unit Manager
* Katie Harrell, Joint Institute for Wood Products Innovation
* Marcie Yates, Land Use Planning Manager
* Alex Vest, Wildfire Planning Specialist
* Mazonika Kemp, Records Administrator
* Anna Castro, Executive Assistant

**DEPARTMENTAL STAFF PRESENT:**

* Daniel Berlant, State Fire Marshal, CAL FIRE
* Anale Burlew, Chief Deputy Director, Forestry & Fire Protection, CAL FIRE
* Eric Huff, Assistant Deputy Director, Forest Practice, CAL FIRE

**Board Members Roll Call:**

Member Lopez Present

Member Wade Present

Member Blake Present

Member Delbar Absent

Member Forsburg-Pardi Present

Member Jahangiri Present

Member Goldsworthy Present

Member Hilburn Present

Chairman O’Brien Present

*Quorum established*

**Announcement of Action(s) Taken in Executive Session:**

Jeff Slaton, Senior Counsel for the Board reported that during executive session the Board discussed the three items on the agenda. With respect to the two litigation matters the Board discussed and took no reportable actions. Also, the Board considered the Civil Penalty CP22-13C, Cassidy and the Board adopted without modification the proposed decision by the Administrative Law Judge in that matter.

**Consent Calendar Items:**

**01-22-01 Chairman O’Brien moves to accept items on the Consent Calendar as presented. Member Lopez seconds the motion.**

**Roll Call:**

**Jahangiri: Aye**

**Goldsworthy: Aye**

**Hilburn: Aye**

**Lopez: Aye**

**Wade: Aye**

**Blake: Aye**

**Forsburg-Pardi: Aye**

**Delbar: Absent**

**O’Brien: Aye**

**Motion passed.**

**Report of the Chairman, Terrence O’Brien:**

Chairman O’Brien welcomed Elicia Goldsworthy and Ryan Hilburn to the Board. He stated they bring a wealth of knowledge and experience. He stated he is confident that the Board will benefit greatly from their appointments. Chairman wanted to acknowledge and thank prior Board member Mike Jani for his time and dedication to the Board. Also, he thanked all the fire fighters and first responders who have battled the Los Angeles fires. Chairman shared his view that climate change has helped fuel the startling increase in wildfires. He stated he thinks it’s important that the Board and the State look for ways to use California’s resources to help rebuild Los Angeles.

**Report of the Director, Daniel Berlant, State Fire Marshal, CAL FIRE:**

Chief Berlant welcomed the new Board members and stated the Department looks forward to working with both members. Chief Berlant provided a brief overview of the recent fire activity. Assistant Deputy Director Eric Huff discussed some of the work now underway in anticipation of rain that is in the forecast. Chief Berlant stated he is happy to answer any questions the Board may have regarding the Director’s Report that was submitted.

Natural Resource Management

Forest Practice Program

Watershed Protection Program

* Staff are assigned to Watershed Emergency Response Teams (WERT) on the southern California fires, assessing post-fire hazards to life and property related to debris flows, flooding, and rockfall.
* WERT communicates rapidly to the communities their findings to help them prepare after wildfires.
* In 2024, CAL FIRE responded to 15 fires in partnership with the California Geological survey. WERT has been out on the Palisades and Eaton Fire for over a week.
* Currently our values at risk tally are at 124 on the Palisades Fire. One of those values at risk having a high risk to life and property. 19 of those values at risk having a moderate risk.
* The team has released a geo data base to the incident management team so they can track and accurately located these values at risk for treatment action.
* The team expects to complete a draft report of their findings later today.
* The Eaton Fire has a higher risk than the Palisades because the fire is situated below the San Gabriel Mountains.
* The current at value at risk count is 124 values at risk. However, 14 of those have a high life and safety risk and 21 have a moderate risk.
* Palisades and Eaton have Incident Management Team 5 assigned/deployed to help with implementation of protection measures.
* The team took a look at the Kenneth Fire which straddles the Ventura County and Los Angeles line. Team found 7 values at risk however all of those values were rated as low.

**Board Comments:**

* Member Goldsworthy ask what is the size of the WERT team and the background expertise they have?
	+ Chief Huff stated that the WERTs are scaled to the level of risk and the size of the fire. For example, WERT on the Palisades Fire is six and on the Eaton Fire it is 6-8.
* Member Wade wanted to know in which responsibility area these fires occurred in. Member Wade asked if there are any other federal response teams working on other fires.
	+ Chief Berlant stated that the Palisades Fire is mostly within the City of Los Angeles Fire Department jurisdiction. The Eaton Fire is mostly within the County of Los Angeles with a small amount of state responsibility. But CAL FIRE contracts with the county to assist. But regardless of jurisdiction CAL FIRE aided in whatever the city and county of Los Angeles requested.
* Member Jahangiri thanked the department and in having such an updated and informational website.
* Member Lopez thanked the Department for all their efforts before and during the event. Stated that having those resources in place before had made a difference in fighting fire.
* Chairman O’Brien asked if it’s still on going in terms of the investigation regarding the causes of these fires.
	+ Chief Berlant stated that it is still an open investigation.

**Executive Officer Report, Edith Hannigan, Executive Officer**

Edith Hannigan welcomed Elicia Goldsworthy and Ryan Hilburn to the Board.

**Presentation:**

State Responsibility Area 5-year Review, Scott Witt, Deputy Chief Pre-Fire Planning, CAL FIRE

**Report of the Regulations Coordinator, Dan Craig, Regulations Program Manager**

**Report of the Standing Committees:**

**Forest Practice Committee and Joint Forest Practice and Management Committee, Rich Wade, Chair**

The Committee met yesterday with our new Member Elicia Goldsworthy in attendance. There were 3 agenda items to discuss.

**Management Committee, Elizabeth Forsburg-Pardi,**

The Management Committee met yesterday and discussed the following items:

* Item #4 was postponed because of the wildfires in Southern California. This will be added to the next Management Committee meeting agenda.

**Resource Protection Committee, J. Lopez, Chair**

The Resource Protection Committee met yesterday and discussed the following items on the agenda:

* Discussed the Land Use Planning Program Update.
* The committee reviewed the Safety Elements for the City of Red Bluff and the City of Glendale
* Discussed the 2024 Fires Risk Reduction Community List Updates.

**Public Comment:**

* Kimberly Burr shared that she is opposed to removing trees. Does not feel that just because it is under some exemption the trees should be taken. She is against the trees to be taken if they fall under the 36 inches without any review or consultation because they are dead, dying or diseased.

**Report of Board’s Advisory Committees:**

**Professional Forester’s Examining Committee (PFEC), Dan Stapleton, Licensing Officer**

The California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (Board) has reviewed and certified the October 4, 2024, RPF and CRM Exam results. The following individuals are recommended for licensing as Registered Professional Foresters (RPF) by the PFEC.

* Applicant 7969-Christoopher Losi
* Applicant 7972-Richard Rappaport
* Applicant 7978-Elizabeth Sahara
* Applicant 7980-Jan Land
* Applicant 7984-Marie Antoine
* Applicant 7987-Mitchell McFarland
* Applicant 7993-Valarie Elder
* Applicant 7994-Wayne Davis
* Applicant 7995-Zach Rocha
* Applicant 8009-Alexander Herr
* Applicant 8010 Amanda Mia
* Applicant 8011-Andrew Mills
* Applicant 8015-Christopher Hale
* Applicant 8016-Jesse Gruenberg
* Applicant 8018-Kyle Dennis
* Applicant 8021-Parsa Arjomandinezhad
* Applicant 8024-Alexander Birkhofer
* Applicant 8026-Daniel Samaniago

**01-22-02 Chairman O’Brien move to certify as Licensed Registered Professional Foresters those individuals recommended by the Professional Foresters Examining Committee as fulfilling all qualifications required under the Professional Foresters Law. Member Goldsworthy seconds the motion.**

**Roll Call:**

**Jahangiri: Aye**

**Goldsworthy: Aye**

**Hilburn: Aye**

**Lopez: Aye**

**Wade: Aye**

**Blake: Aye**

**Forsburg-Pardi: Aye**

**Delbar: Absent**

**O’Brien: Aye**

**Motion passed.**

**Recognition of RPF passings:**

* Dr. Carlton Yee, RPF #911
* Glen Rouse, RPF #2552
* Pam Giacomini

**Joint Institute for Wood Products Innovation, Katie Harrell, Board Staff**

* California Environmental Quality Act Support for Wood Utilization Draft Final Report, Christiana Darlington, Clere Inc.
* Revisions to Board Policy 0338.1: Interagency Agreements Indirect Costs Calculations.

**01-22-03 Chairman O’Brien move to approve the changes to the Board Policy 0388.1, as presented. Member Wade seconds the motion.**

**Roll Call:**

**Jahangiri: Aye**

**Goldsworthy: Aye**

**Hilburn: Aye**

**Lopez: Aye**

**Wade: Aye**

**Blake: Aye**

**Forsburg-Pardi: Aye**

**Delbar: Absent**

**O’Brien: Aye**

**Motion passed.**

**PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

**Public Hearing for Watercourse Crossing and Emergency Notice Watercourse Crossing Requirements, Jane Van Susteren, Regulations Coordinator**

* The proposed action addresses reporting for Watercourse Crossing under emergency notices for timber operations and clarifies the authority of responsible agencies for Watercourse Crossing.

**Public Hearing for 2025 Fire Risk Reduction Community List, Marcie Yates, Land Use Planning Program Manager**

* The proposed action updates regulations concerning the Fire Risk Reduction Community List to address outdated data, lack of clarity for applicants, and an insufficient timeline to support the programs growing demands.

**PRESENTATIONS:**

**2024 Forestry Challenge Winners** – Diane Dealey Neill, Forestry Educators Incorporated

**Update on “Effects of Forest Management and Wood Utilization on Carbon Sequestration and Storage in California” and FIA Intensification –** Nadia Tase, Program Manager, and Gerard Dean, Forest Inventory and Monitoring Specialist, CAL FIRE

**Fixing Our Forests with Beneficial Fire: An Environmental Liability Solution** - William G. Dessert, TRIP, AFIS, SEIP, Environmental Risk Advisor, Insurance Product Developer, Arroyo Insurance Services

**CONCLUSION**

**Public Forum**

**Public Comments:**

* Larry Aguilera acknowledges all the work that the board members do. State he is here in support for Jackson State Demonstration Forest.
* Richard Gienger stated that he feels the Biometrics Program the staff is working on is very important. He appreciates all the detail and expertise that all that CAL FIRE is doing for the fires and other emergencies. Also, he commented on Jackson State Demonstration Forest and he hopes the Board has read the letter from Save Jackson Coalition.

**Adjournment**

Respectfully submitted,

ATTEST:



Edith Hannigan Terrence O’Brien

Executive Officer Chairman