BOARD OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION MEETING MINUTES

Sacramento, CA

March 2, 2022

**BOARD OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION MEMBERS**:

# **BOARD OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION MEMBERS**:

## **Present**:

* Keith Gilless, Chair
* Rich Wade
* Chris Chase
* Susan Husari
* Mike Jani
* Katie Delbar
* Elizabeth Forsburg Pardi
* J. Lopez

## BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

# **BOARD STAFF PRESENT:**

* Edith Hannigan, Executive Officer
* Eric Hedge, Regulations Program Manager
* Dan Stapleton, Licensing Officer
* Jeff Slaton, Senior Board Counsel
* Deniele Cade, Staff Analyst, Licensing
* Andrew Lawhorn, Forestry Assistant II
* Jane Van Susteren, Environmental Scientist
* Kristina Wolf, Environmental Scientist
* Laura Alarcon Stalians, Administrative Manager
* Robert Roth, Board Counsel
* Claire McCoy, Wildfire Planning Specialist
* Sara Walter, Contracts Analyst
* Katie Harrell, Joint Institute for Wood Products Innovation

# **DEPARTMENTAL STAFF PRESENT**:

* Matt Damon, Deputy Chief, Land Use Planning
* Matthew Reischman, Deputy Director, Resource Management
* Daniel Berlant, Assistant Deputy Director
* Eric Huff, Staff Chief, Forest Practice Program
* Chris Keithley, Staff Chief, Fire and Resource Assessment Program
* Russ Henly, Forest Policy Advisor, Fire and Resource Assessment Program
* Rich Walker, Research Program Specialist, Fire and Resource Assessment Program
* Drew Coe, Manager, Watershed Protection Program
* Will Olsen, Forest Practice Monitoring Specialist, Watershed Protection Program

# **AGENCY STAFF PRESENT**:

* Liz Berger, Deputy Regional Forester, US Forest Service Pacific Southwest Regions
* Jonathan Warmerdam, North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board
* Elliot Chasin, California Department of Fish and Wildlife

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

Jeff Slaton, Senior Board Counsel, reported that the Board discussed the three items on its agenda. No reportable actions were taken.

# Consent Calendar Items

* Approval of the December 8, 2021 and January 19, 2022 meeting minutes (with minor edits if requested by members of the Board);
* Review of Rulemaking Matrix;
* Reappointment of the following individuals to the Joint Institute for Wood Products Innovation Advisory Council
	+ Joe Desmond, Catalyst Partners, 2-year-term
	+ Tim Robards, CAL FIRE, 2-year-term
* Appointment of the following individuals to the Jackson Advisory Group
	+ Al Lawrence, Licensed Timber Operator
	+ Joanna Nelson, Forest Conservation
	+ Reno Franklin, Traditional Ecological Knowledge
* Reappointment of the following individuals to the PFEC.
	+ Frank Mulhair (PFEC Chair, Industry member)
	+ Dan Sendek (Public member)
	+ Jim Hawkins (Industry member)
* RPF Withdrawal Request – RPF/CRM Vital Stats

**­­­03-02-22** **Chair Gilless moved to approve the items on the Consent Calendar. Member Lopez seconded.**

**Roll Call:**

**Husari aye**

**Lopez aye**

**Delbar aye**

**Jani aye**

**Wade aye**

**Chase aye**

**Forsburg aye**

**Gilless aye**

**The motion passed.**

# MONTHLY BOARD REPORTS

## **Report of the Chairman, Dr. Keith Gilless**

Chair Gilless announced the anticipated return to a hybrid meeting format at the Board’s April meeting, with an in-person component in Sacramento and continued opportunities for virtual engagement.

Item 12(a) would not be covered in the March Board meeting; Board members were contemplating public input and working to make the best decisions possible in light of the Board’s responsibilities but were unready at the time to consider the State Minimum Fire Safe Regulations in the context of a Board meeting.

Farewell and acknowledgement of Member Husari, whose last meeting it was as a Board member. Chair Gilless provided an overview of Member Husari’s career and her work with the Board.

Member Delbar expressed her appreciation for Member Husari’s wisdom, kindness, and advice as a Board member.

Member Lopez commented that was widely respected by her colleagues and thanked her for her guidance and empathetic engagement with her colleagues and the public.

Member Jani commented that Member Husari was a very deliberate thinker and that he would miss working with her.

Member Chase commented that Member Husari had been a pleasure to work with, and was thoughtful, knowledgeable, open-minded, and direct. He said had always valued her opinion and wished her luck.

Member Pardi thanked Member Husari for welcoming her onto the Board as a new member. She had enjoyed working with her and thanked her for her guidance and thoughts.

Member Wade expressed appreciation for Member Husari’s work on behalf of the Board and for helping her fellow Board members to better understand complex issues.

Kevin Rynearson on behalf of the California Fire Chiefs Association, stating that it had been a delight working with Member Husari she has represented the Board’s, California’s, and the fire service’s interests.

Richard Gienger commented to thank Member Husari.

George Gentry commented that he admired Member Husari for her trailblazing and respected her for the knowledge she brought to the Board.

Richard Fowler commented that it had been a pleasure working with Member Husari and he appreciated her knowledge, attention to detail and personality.

Executive Officer Hannigan thanked Member Husari for her perspective, leadership, guidance and mentorship.

Member Husari thanked everyone for their comments. She expressed appreciation for her time as a Board member, particularly as the Board had transitioned into dealing more with fire protection in addition to forest practice.

Chair Gilless announced that Member Pardi would be filling Member Husari’s role on the Effectiveness Monitoring Committee.

## Report of the Director, Deputy Director Matthew Reischman and Assistant Deputy Director Daniel Berlant on behalf of Acting Director Mike Richwine

* Echoed thanks for Member Husari’s service on the Board.
* CAL FIRE crews had responded to over 200 wildfires so far in 2022, which was above the five-year average for the same time period.
* Fuels reduction and defensible space work had remained steady in 2022.
* A final draft of the Fire Hazard Severity Zone re-map had been produced by FRAP and was under internal review within four pilot counties, with scientific peer review to follow. The public adoption process of the maps was anticipated to take place for State Responsibility Areas in the late spring or early summer months, with recommendations to Local Responsibility Areas for adoption beginning later in the year.
* Fire Prevention Grant solicitation had closed on February 9, with review of the over 250 grant applications received ongoing. Grant announcements were anticipated later in the spring.
* Utility Wildfire Mitigation Program was reviewing the Investor-Owned Utility Companies’ Wildfire Mitigation Plan. CAL FIRE reminded the IOUs to remain focused on vegetation management and limit public-safety power shutdowns to a short-term solution.

### Resource Management

* The Watershed Protection Program had recently conducted trainings on watercourse crossings in coordination with the Department of Fish and Wildlife.
* Emergency Exemption Notice and Monitoring staff had completed 31 of 43 samples, or 72% of its forest prevention sampling target.
* Two Licensed Timber Operator (LTO) classes were held in February.
* The Urban Forestry Program was in the process of distributing 42 grants $29.9 million total), with proposed urban forestry projects planting about 37,000 trees and creating one thousand new jobs.
* Reported an uptick in bark beetle activity across the state, specifically in the Sierra Nevadas. This was understood to be related to the year’s early warm temperatures.
* Staff were continuing to work on oak borer control and mitigation options.
* Online burn permits were to be available May 1st for prescribed burning.
* The first offering of a class on cultural burning awareness had taken place in January, with additional classes anticipated in the coming months.
* There were seven active CAL FIRE CalVTP projects in the Northern Region and four in the Southern Region, with a total of 20 CalVTP projects statewide (accounting for various lead agencies besides CAL FIRE).
* The Chaparral Management Plan Vegetation Management Program had 86 active projects statewide.
* The Department was in the process of issuing its Wildfire Resilience Block Grants, with up to $14 million available in landowner assistance.
* The nursery program was in the process of sowing 140 seeds in the month of March and had about $4 million available for business and workforce development grants within the nursery space.

* Of the 8 Forest Legacy projects funded in 2021, all but one grant agreement had been fully executed and were moving into the due diligence phase.
* The Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force was in the process of developing a new multi-agency project tracking tool, based on CalMapper, to improve consistency in the way data is compiled and reported.
* The Forest Health Program opened its seventh grant solicitation in January and held a series of workshop to communicate the application process.
* The Fire and Resource Assessment Program had begun the 2022 update to its Forest and Range Assessment.

### Fire Protection

* CAL FIRE Law Enforcement officers made 262 arrests in 2021, of which 149 were arson related. Civil Cost Recovery received $23 million.
* The Operations Support program was continuing to work with federal cooperators to make enhancements to the department’s Computer-Aided Dispatching (CAD) system for improved 9-1-1 call processing times and location accuracy, to be deployed by the end of June 2022.
* The Aviation Management Unit was working on contract issues associated with the S70i helicopter procurement.
* Several personnel were undergoing training on the operation of unmanned air operations systems.
* The Davis Mobile Equipment was experiencing facility vehicle delivery delays due to global supply chain issues, with anticipated impacts to several Budget Change Proposals.
* 28 CDCR Type I hand crews were available statewide. 17 additional crews had less than 12 members, making them unavailable for statewide response. 19 of 22 available California Conservation Corps crews were ready to deploy. This left CAL FIRE with a total of 47 Type I fire crews available for statewide response out of the174 that were funded, a significant shortage.
* State and Federal programs were working internationally with Portugal and New South Wales, Australia to develop MOUs for sharing technology in wildland fire suppression, climate change and resource management.

Member Husari asked where the list of VMP projects could be found, so that Range Management Committee could see the distribution of those projects. Deputy Director Reischman did not know if the list had been published online but promised to follow up with Member Husari.

Member Chase asked Deputy Director Reischman if there were projected hand crew numbers as the year progressed into peak wildfire season. Deputy Director Reischman responded that there were 167 inmates currently in the CDCR camps, a shortage of about 1,900 from the maximum number allocated for the camps. Bringing the 17 existing understaffed crews up to full staffing levels would also help improve the numbers. Member Chase expressed concern about the shortage of available hand crews and requested ongoing updates.

Chair Gilless asked for clarification on the time and training needed to reaggregate the understaffed hand crews into available crews. Deputy Director Reischman stated that there was additional training required and Chief Berlant offered to follow up with more information on the timeline for bringing the understaffed crews up to full availability.

Chair Gilless asked to clarify whether the reported staffing shortages presented a current concern at that point in the fire season or were primarily of concern regarding the anticipated increase in fire activity later in the season. Chief Berlant emphasized the expectation for those numbers to increase, with the remaining challenge throughout the season of needing hand crews to fight fire in areas of steep ground where heavy equipment cannot reach.

Chair Gilless asked about the CAD enhancements and whether they would be dependent on a cell phone user having location services or a certain app turned on. Chief Berlant responded that the technology would rely on a cell phone’s GPS chip, and anticipated that a user having switched off location services for privacy reasons may pose some impact but he was unsure of the specifics.

Chair Gilless asked that the Department coordinate with Executive Officer Hannigan on the Fire Hazard Severity Zone roll-out and ongoing review in four pilot counties, as the Board had significant interest in the Fire Hazard Severity Zones. Deputy Director Reischman responded that they would follow up with Executive Officer Hannigan and ensure that the Board remained updated.

Richard Gienger commented that the management of Jackson State Demonstration Forest should have been on the Management Committee’s March agenda and open for public comment. He urged the Board to adopt a moratorium on logging in JDSF until issues around climate change and tribal interests had been resolved with broad stakeholder input and a shift of power away from CAL FIRE.

## Report of the USFS Regional Forester – Liz Berger, Deputy Regional Forester

Presentation: US Forest Service Pacific Southwest Region Report to California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection.

## Board Discussion

Member Chase commented that he was pleased to see federal investment in reforestation and that it was important for Region 5 to be realistic about its backlog of needed reforestation, which he argued was substantially higher than the number reported in light of recent wildfires. He noted that given the challenges the USFS faces around herbicide use, it would be critical to get trees in ground immediately following salvage harvest after a fire to prevent them being overtaken by competing vegetation.

He stated that workforce capacity appeared to be a primary constraint and encouraged the USFS to use partners wherever possible to increase capacity as well as focusing on increased efficiencies, including more durable treatments. Regarding wildfire suppression, Member Chase hoped for continued prioritization of initial attack prioritization. He stated that this was not a year to manage wildfire and hoped for clear direction that all fires would be aggressively suppressed during fire season. He encouraged the agency to evaluate its strategies and tactics, add a night shift for more effective suppression opportunities, and to reduce reliance on firing operations given staffing shortages. He stated that it would be critical for CAL FIRE, Forest Service and other agencies to cooperate as a cohesive group on suppression activities.

Ms. Berger responded that the USFS had completed an assessment of the extent of post-fire reforestation need for all large fires in the last year as of February 2022. She noted the need for more rapid assessment even as suppression is ongoing. She expected to have an updated number available soon. Regarding workforce capacity, she noted that the agency would be holding national-level collective hiring events for foresters and fuels reduction technicians.

Member Delbar asked whether the USFS was working to raise the pay grades of the lower General Schedule (GS) job postings that were currently posted as GS 2-5. She expressed concern that young people were qualified for those jobs but that the low wages were prohibitive.

Diana Craig, Director of Ecosystem Management and leader of an upcoming USFS collective hiring event, responded that all of the positions at the collective hiring events would be GS 5, 6 and above for forestry positions. She did not know as much about the pay grades for firefighting positions, but noted that there had been some work at the national level to increase those GS levels as well.

Ms. Berger added that they were reevaluating the continued use of those lower grades and looking into raising the wage to at least $15 an hour for the lower pay grades.

Member Delbar said that RMAC had made requests for additional room for growth to be created in positions related to range management.

Ms. Berger responded that the USFS was hiring 20% more employees than its current total workforce, a significant increase from previous hiring years. Most (80%) new positions would include a career ladder (i.e. starting at GS 9 with room to move to GS 10 and 11) to improve retention.

Member Delbar asked about the agency’s new funds for roads and whether there was an available project list for where it planned to use that funding.

Ms. Berger responded that a project list had recently been finalized and she would share it with Member Delbar.

Member Delbar asked about the agency’s 213 unfilled range lease agreements. She acknowledged that NEPA had played a role in not reopening those agreements and wondered if there was a way to get sheep and other animals back on some of those allotments.

Ms. Berger said she would bring that question forward to their regional range program manager.

Member Husari asked about the restructuring of interagency hotshot crews to allow individual crewmembers to rotate out while whole crews remain on incidents for longer than 14 days. She noted that instead of hiring firefighters as Park Technicians, Forestry Technicians, or Range Technicians, there is a forthcoming new federal classification for Wildland Firefighter that will help with recruitment and pay.

Member Husari also commented that while she respected Member Chase’s opinion, she wanted to make it clear that there was a range of perspectives on the Board about how the USFS should manage wildland fire, especially among the Board’s public members. She noted her belief that there is a place for some thoughtful management of lighting fires in some areas, and that she did not necessarily support going back to the “10am policy” of full suppression.

Ms. Berger said she would get back to the Board with an answer on restructuring hotshot crews, but confirmed that work was ongoing to create a Wildland Firefighter classification and expected to see that change implemented soon. She expressed appreciation for Member Husari’s comment about continuing to use managed wildfire where it makes sense to do so, and clarified that the agency’s intention would be aggressive initial attack in situations where it is unknown whether fire can be managed. She noted that the ability to manage wildfire and move away from the “10am policy” requires adequate staffing and resources, and anticipated policy being in place again this fire season given current conditions. She stated that she would pass on Member Husari’s comments with Region 5 Director of Fire and Aviation, share that the Board has multiple perspectives on the issue, and would report back.

Member Jani asked whether the USFS’ new NEPA authorities extend into areas designated as roadless, specifically regarding the pre-construction of fire breaks.

Ms. Berger responded that new NEPA authorities were generally not intended for roadless areas, as they were tied to linear features such as roadways or powerlines. The new authorities may apply in roadless areas in some cases where these features exist, but largely the USFS had separate existing authorities which apply to roadless areas. She noted that the USFS anticipated being able to use a different new authority soon which is based on imminent hazard and could extend over larger landscapes such as roadless areas. She stated that the agency didn’t want to neglect fuels treatments in roadless areas, and that active management could be accomplished in those areas provided appropriate analysis and planning.

Member Gilless suggested that the agency’s Region 5 Priorities should be adjusted to not group “Fire suppression responsibilities” along with the agency’s civil and legal obligations towards individuals as an “Overarching/permanent priority.” He was concerned that this might be inconsistent with the National Forest Management Act. He recommended that suppression responsibilities be broken out separately and not presented in the context of civic and social responsibilities.

Ms. Berger responded that this was helpful feedback and she would bring it back to the team that developed the language.

## Report of the Executive Officer, Edith Hannigan

* Staffing Update
	+ A preferred candidate had been selected for the Board’s Executive Assistant position and was undergoing Human Resources review before a job offer was to be made. Staff anticipated that the candidate would be onboarded within 4-6 weeks.
	+ Interviews for the Land Use Planning Program Manager position would be conducted the following week and staff hoped to have the position filled within 6-8 weeks.
* A complete draft of the Board’s 2021 Annual Report was available in the meeting materials, including priorities for the Management, Resource Protection, and Forest Practice Committees.

**03-02-22 Chair Gilless moved to accept the Board’s Annual Report 2021 as distributed. Member Jani seconded the motion.**

**Roll Call:**

**Husari aye**

**Lopez aye**

**Delbar aye**

**Jani aye**

**Wade aye**

**Chase aye**

**Forsburg aye**

**Gilless aye**

**The motion passed.**

* A Report on Pending Legislation was available in the meeting materials.
* The Board’s April meeting was set to take place in person in Sacramento, with a webinar broadcast available for virtual participants.
* The Board’s July meeting was set to take place in Santa Cruz and the September meeting would include a tour of the LaTour Demonstration State Forest.
* Executive Officer Hannigan was working with staff at the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to finalize a draft of the Botanical Resources Memo for the Forest Practice Committee to review at its April meeting.

## Report of the Regulations Coordinator, Eric Hedge and Jane Van Susteren

* Eric Hedge introduced the findings of emergency and rule text for the emergency rulemaking action titled “Santa Cruz and San Mateo Weekend Emergency,” for Board consideration for readoption. He stated that Board staff recommended readoption.

### Public & Agency Comment

Eric Huff commented that the Department supported a readoption of the emergency rulemaking.

### Board Discussion

Member Jani commented that the emergency rulemaking had been useful in accomplishing needed fire recovery work and that he supported readoption.

**03-02-22 Member Wade moved to readopt the rulemaking titled and to have staff take all action reasonably necessary for the adopted regulations to take effect, including making appropriate non-substantive changes and any changes to facilitate OAL review and approval. Member Jani seconded the motion.**

**Roll Call:**

**Husari aye**

**Lopez aye**

**Delbar aye**

**Jani aye**

**Wade aye**

**Chase aye**

**Forsburg aye**

**Gilless aye**

**The motion passed.**

* Jane Van Susteren introduced the Certificate of Compliance rulemaking titled “Emergency Notice RPF Responsibility”, originally adopted in July 2021 and authorized for a permanent rulemaking in November 2021. The FSOR and final rule text were before the Board for approval.

### Public & Agency Comment

Jonathan Warmerdam, North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, commented in support of the rulemaking and noted improved outcomes since the emergency rulemaking had taken effect. He voiced concerns about lack of clarity in the language around operational provisions and construction of approved watercourse crossings and suggested a review that included California Water Boards and the CA Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) to provide input. He also requested clarification on which provisions are considered “operational” and on which agency approves watercourse crossings under a ministerial process, requesting that it be stated explicitly if this agency is CDFW.

Elliot Chasin, CA Department of Fish and Wildlife, commented in support of Mr. Warmerdam’s call for the Board to revisit the regulations to improve the clarity of the emergency notice process.

Eric Huff, CAL FIRE, commented in support of permanently adopting the emergency rulemaking. He voiced support for Mr. Warmerdam’s and Mr. Chasin’s comments. He noted that findings from the Department’s Emergency Notice monitoring sampling results and inspection data should be the primary information source informing decisions going forward.

**03-02-22 Member Wade moved to approve the Final Statement of Reasons for the Certificate of Compliance rulemaking titled “Emergency Notice RPF Responsibility”. Member Delbar seconded.**

**Roll Call:**

**Husari aye**

**Lopez aye**

**Delbar aye**

**Jani aye**

**Wade aye**

**Chase aye**

**Forsburg aye**

**Gilless aye**

**The motion passed.**

**03-02-22 Member Wade moved to adopt the draft regulatory text for the Certificate of Compliance rulemaking titled “Emergency Notice RPF Responsibility” and authorize staff to take all action reasonably necessary for the adopted regulations to take effect, including appropriate non-substantive changes and any changes to facilitate OAL review and approval. Member Jani seconded.**

**Roll Call:**

**Husari aye**

**Lopez aye**

**Delbar aye**

**Jani aye**

**Wade aye**

**Chase aye**

**Forsburg aye**

**Gilless aye**

**The motion passed.**

# Report of the Standing Committees

## Forest Practice Committee, Rich Wade, Chair

* CAL FIRE biologist Stacy Stanish presented an update on Northern Spotted Owl issues and the implementation of a Northern Spotted Owl Resource Plan, with the aim to facilitate NSO protection while allowing landowners to practice forestry.
* Discussion of a proposed rule change regarding content of the Notice of Intent required for harvest documentation, as specified in recommendations from the Department. Board staff had prepared a rule plead to make these changes.
* Discussion of committee priorities, including discussion of the Department’s 2021 letter to the Board regarding the FPC’s priorities.
* Review of a potential rulemaking for Class II-L determination. Board staff had prepared an Initial Statement of Reasons and the FPC was ready to bring the rulemaking before the full Board to begin a 45-day comment period.

Eric Huff, CAL FIRE, commented in support of moving ahead with a 45-day notice on the rulemaking amending Class II-L determinations.

**03-02-22 Member Wade moved to authorize Board staff to submit the rulemaking titled “Class II-L Determination Amendments” and authorize staff to take all action reasonably necessary for the adopted regulations to take effect, including appropriate non-substantive changes and any changes to facilitate OAL review and approval. Member Delbar seconded.**

**Roll Call:**

**Husari aye**

**Lopez aye**

**Delbar aye**

**Jani aye**

**Wade aye**

**Chase aye**

**Forsburg aye**

**Gilless aye**

**The motion passed.**

## Management Committee, Chris Chase, Chair

* Discussion of issues regarding Less Than 3-acre Conversion exemptions. The committee held a workshop on February 7th, following which Board staff revised the draft rule plead to address concerns. Many stakeholders, especially but not exclusively building interests, felt that the draft plead did not adequately address their concerns. The Management Committee would continue working towards effective solutions in collaboration with stakeholders.
* Discussion of basal area stocking standards and the progress made by the Uneven-Aged working group. George Gentry, leader of the working group, hoped to have updates at the Board’s next meeting on several key areas.
* Richard Gienger attempted to comment on issues relating to the management of Jackson Demonstration State Forest, but the committee was unable to hear or discuss his comments because the topic was not on the meeting agenda.

## Resource Protection Committee, Sue Husari, Chair

* Discussion of 0-5’ Zone defensible space regulatory development workgroup’s progress, with a presentation from Yana Valachovic, UC Cooperative Extension. Member Husari recommended, and Chair Gilless agreed, that all Board members should review the materials provided by the workgroup and familiarize themselves with this rulemaking.
* Land Use Planning Program update, including on the Subdivision Review Program’s progress.
* Safety Element review for Cities of Lake Forest, Beverly Hills and Shasta Lake.

# Report of the Board’s Advisory Committees

## Report of the Professional Foresters Examining Committee, Dan Stapleton, Licensing Officer

* The PFEC reviewed at its meeting 11 applications for the Registered Professional Forester exam, of which it approved 10. 47 applicants were to sit for the next RPF exam.
* There were currently 1116 active RPFs and 82 CRMS, with an additional 121 RPFs and 6 CRMS in withdrawal status.
* Two license renewal cycles had gone by since the 2020 licensing fee amendments which increased license renewal fees. There was a net reduction of 19 RPFs and 6 CRMs since January of 2019 when the fee increases were proposed.
* 47% of the current RPF registry had practiced for 30 years or more and was likely to retire soon, indicating a need to increase the number of RPFs through increased exam participation and success. The PFEC’s strategies to accomplish this included:
	+ Increased outreach presence at out of state SAF-accredited universities in the Western US and Canada, via Forestry Educators Incorporated.
	+ Developing ideas for alternative pathways for exam applicants to account for more non-forestry majors taking the exam and applicants following non-traditional forestry paths. Apprenticeship and training models were under consideration to substitute for certain experience requirements such as 3 years under the supervision of an RPF.
	+ The PFEC had received two RPF complaints in the last year. One had been dismissed as not actionable and the other was currently under investigation.
	+ Acknowledged the passing of two RPFs, Ken Nehoda and Joseph Thornton.

### Board Discussion

Chair Gilless commented that the issue of the Certified Forester program being moved closer to the point at which people earn their bachelors degrees was a matter of active discussion between Society of American Foresters (SAF) leadership and forestry deans and chairs at universities. He suggested checking in with the SAF president about their thoughts on how the Certified Forester program might be used earlier in foresters’ careers.

Member Husari commented to share her condolences regarding RPF Ken Nehoda’s passing. She had worked closely with Mr. Nehoda.

Member Lopez echoed Member Husari’s comments about Ken Nehoda. He said Mr. Nehoda was a great person and teacher and represented the forestry profession well.

Chair Gilless encouraged the PFEC to continue its efforts to expand the number of RPFs in the state.

# Public Hearing on the rulemaking titled “Substantially Damaged Consistency Amendments, 2021”.

Eric Hedge introduced proposed amendments to the Forest Practice Rules, which the Board authorized for public noticing in November 2021, intended to resolve an issue of clarity. The Board had received no public comment thus far.

### Public & Agency Comment

Eric Huff, CAL FIRE, commented in support of the proposed amendments. He believed they would provide needed clarity.

Chair Gilless closed the hearing and directed staff to prepare a Final Statement of Reasons for the rulemaking.

# CONCLUSION

## Public Forum

Larry Hanson commented to express concerns about even-aged logging methods opening forest floors to additional sunlight, resulting in growth of understory ladder fuels and creating wind tunnels that would elevate wildfire danger.

Terri Faulkner attempted to comment but technical difficulties prevented her from doing so. She agreed to send her comment via email to Chair Gilless. As of April 1, no communication was received.

## Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,

ATTEST:



Edith Hannigan

Executive Officer

Keith Gilless

Chair