BOARD OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION MEETING MINUTES

Sacramento, CA

November 4, 2020

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

## **Present**:

* Keith Gilless, Chair
* Katie Delbar
* Rich Wade
* Marc Los Huertos
* Darcy Wheeles
* Chris Chase
* Susan Husari
* Mike Jani

# **BOARD STAFF PRESENT:**

* Matt Dias, Executive Officer
* Eric Hedge, Regulations Program Manager
* Dan Stapleton, Licensing Officer
* Jeff Slaton, Board Counsel
* Deniele Cade, Staff Analyst, Licensing
* Andrew Lawhorn, Forestry Assistant II
* Edith Hannigan, Land Use Planning Program Manager
* Laura Alarcon Stalians, Administrative Manager
* Robert Roth, Attorney IV­­­­
* Clarie McCoy, Environmental Planner
* Sara Walter, AGPA
* Katie Harrell, Joint Institute for Wood Products Innovation
* Linda Cano, Executive Assistant

# **DEPARTMENTAL STAFF PRESENT**:

* Thom Porter, Deputy Director, CAL FIRE
* Dennis Hall, Assistant Deputy Director, Forest Practice
* Eric Huff, Staff Chief, Forest Practice Program
* Bill Solinsky, Forester III, THP Administration
* Rick Carr, Southern Region Staff Chief of Resource Management CAL FIRE
* Kim Corella, Forest Pest Specialist, CAL FIRE

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

Jeff Slaton, Board Counsel, reported that the Board discussed the items on the agenda during Executive session. No reportable actions were taken.

# Consent Calendar Items

1. Review of Rulemaking Matrix
2. Reappointment of Mikhail Gershfeld, Suzanne Kim, Heather Strong, and Larry Swan to the Joint Institute for Wood Products Innovation Advisory Council to terms of two years

**11-20-01** **Chair Gilless moved to approve the items on the Consent Calendar. Member Los Huertos seconded.**

**Roll Call:**

**Wade aye**

**Husari aye**

**Jani aye**

**Delbar aye**

**Wheeles unable to vote due to limited meeting connectivity**

**Los Huertos aye**

**Chase aye**

**Gilless aye**

**The motion passed unanimously with one member unable to vote due to limited meeting connectivity.**

# MONTHLY BOARD REPORTS

## **Report of the Chairman, Dr. Keith Gilless:** Chair Gilless commented on the timing of the Board meeting being a day after the Presidential election. It will be taken into consideration in the future.

## Report of the Executive Officer, Matt Dias:

* Staffing Update: The Environmental Scientist position has been advertised and the Board has received 45 applications. Board staff will review the applications and schedule interviews for the most qualified candidates.
* Director Porter and Executive Officer Dias have been approached by the Assembly of Natural Resources Committee for a hearing scheduled for November 9. Executive Officer Dias will be speaking on how the CalVTP can assist the state in achieving increased pace and scale of prescribed fire.
* An outline of the Research Plan as well as categories and sub-categories by ranking were presented for consideration at the October Board meeting. The BOF/CALFIRE team is working on putting out a new system on how to achieve broader ranking from various stakeholders across the state in response to Board comments. An online survey will be published on the Board’s website in the near future. The results of the survey will be presented to the Board at the beginning of 2021.
* The Annual Call for Regulatory Review was published, with the closing date for written comments is November 17, 2020. Comments received will be presented to the Board at the December Board meeting.
* Introduction and Board consideration of DRAFT Resolution 2020-2 suspending certification of Fire Safe Ordinances pursuant to 14 CCR § 1270 *et seq*.

**Public Comment**

**Arthur Wylene, Rural Counties Representatives of California**, commented that he supports the resolution. It should be the beginning of a broader conversation on the rules of certification going forward.

**Lisa Lai, member of the public**, shared her concerns on the effects it will have on the cannabis industry.

**Craig Harrison, member of the public,** stated that he supports the moratorium.

**11-20-02 Chair Gilless moved to adopt Resolution 2020-2 Suspending Certification of Fire Safe Ordinances. Member Jani seconded.**

**Roll Call:**

**Wade aye**

**Husari aye**

**Jani aye**

**Delbar aye**

**Wheeles unable to vote due to limited meeting connectivity**

**Los Huertos aye**

**Chase aye**

**Gilless aye**

**The motion passed with one member unable to vote due to limited meeting connectivity.**

* Review of Chaptered Legislation and Veto Message that pertain to the Board’s programs
  1. AB 3074
  2. SB 182
* Update on the development of the draft Research Plan pursuant to PRC § 4789.6

## Report of the Director, Thom Porter

### Fire Activity:

### CAL FIRE is monitoring eleven major wildfires, with two remaining on State Responsibility Area, the remaining nine fires were on federally managed land.

* As of the date of today’s Board meeting, there are 4,400 firefighting personnel, 78 fire crews, 363 fire engines, 63 bulldozers, 99 water tenders and 35 helicopters assigned to wildfires across the state.
* CAL FIRE continues to work through damage assessment, there were 9,358 structures destroyed during the fire siege.
* California has experienced 5 of the top 20 wildfires with the most structure loss in the last five years.
* The next list was a mess. The Cedar fire is lumped in with 5 fires that burned this year and it burned in 1993. These are a subset of the largest fires in California. I finally figured out that this was the Creek Fire, not the Cedar fire.
* Six of the largest fires in California’s history burned in 2020.
* No. 1, August Complex
* No. 3, SCU Lightning Complex
* No. 4, Creek Fire
* No. 5, LNU, Lightning Complex
* No. 6 North Complex
* No. 18 SQF Complex
* The SQF complex, burned through most of Mountain Home Demonstration Forest. CAL FIRE is working to determine the effects of that fire on Giant Sequoia trees. The Mountain Home Forester has seen a massive cone opening with seed covering the ground. Significant regeneration of Giant Sequoia on Mountain Home is expected.
* Since January 1, 2020, 9,279 fires, 100,006 incidents, for 4,197,628 acres have burned. This is the largest number of acres since CAL FIRE has kept records. These figures represent a combined total of state and federal acres.
* CAL FIRE Law Enforcement has arrested 88 arsonists in California, 62 were Wildland fire incidents, and 26 were structure or vehicle fires.
* A very active legislative season that will potentially affect the Board as well as the Department is anticipated. It appears that the impacts from wildfire remains a priority for the Legislature as well as the Administration.

**Weather Outlook**

* Rain and snow is expected in the southern Sierras, coastal mountains and portions of the Northern Region. The Department is planning to transition out of peak season staffing as soon as sufficient precipitation is received.

### Fuels Management

* CAL FIRE exceeded its target of 25,000 acres of prescribed fire in Fiscal Year 19/20 with 27,589 acres burned. Other vegetation treatment targets were also surpassed with 31,063 acres completed, 155% of the target goals.

**Defensible Space Inspections**

* The Department completed 220,240 of the targeted 250,000 inspections in Fiscal Year 19/20. One of the issues the department is facing is a shortage of inspection staffing. The Department is working with the Governor’s office and legislature to increase the capability.

**Inmate Crews**

* The Department was only able to staff 75 crews of 192 allocated inmate crews. Thankfully, the Governor allocated 858 firefighters to act as hand crews this season. This additional workforce will be utilized for fuels reduction projects as the fire season wanes.

### COVID-19

* There are 10 known active cases within the Department, with 48 additional personnel that are self-isolated or in ordered quarantine. CAL FIRE has been able to complete its own contact tracing to minimize the impacts across Department employees.

**Presentation of the Francis H. Raymond Award- Recipient: Tom Jopson.** Mr. Jopson was recognized for his significant contribution to conifer regeneration practices on both the domestic and international fronts.

The following individuals provided support in appreciation on Tom’s outstanding contributions to California forestry.

* Bob Rynearson
* Hisham Salmon
* Mark Gray
* Safak Kemalagli
* Charlie Brown
* Larry Kemp
* Richard Geinger

**Report of Board’s Advisory Committees**

* Range Management Advisory Committee- Edith Hannigan, Land Use Planning Program Manager
* Ms. Hannigan provided an update on the upcoming public workshop series addressing range management and fire risk reduction strategies
* Effectiveness Monitoring Committee (EMC) – Sue Husari, Co-Chair
* Member Husari provided an update on discussions of the EMC including a recommendation to the Board for the EMC to investigate the opportunity to develop a grant program that may assist in distribution of funds made available through the EMC.

**11-20-03 Member Husari moved to direct Board Staff to investigate developing a Grant Program for annual allocations and report back to the Board. Member Delbar seconded.**

**Roll Call:**

**Wade aye**

**Husari aye**

**Jani aye**

**Delbar aye**

**Wheeles unable to vote due to limited meeting c connectivity.**

**Los Huertos aye**

**Chase aye**

**Gilless aye**

**The motion passed with one member unable to vote due to limited meeting connectivity.**

* Joint Institute for Wood Products Innovation- Katie Harrell, Joint Institute Program Analyst
  + Katie Harrell provided an introduction of the Joint Institute Recommendations to Expand Wood and Biomass Utilization in California for consideration of the Board.

**11-20-04 Chair Gilless moved to approve the Recommendations of the Joint Institute for Wood Products Innovation to Expand Wood and Biomass Utilization in California as set forth in the materials provided. Member Wade seconded.**

**Roll Call:**

**Wade aye**

**Husari aye**

**Jani aye**

**Delbar aye**

**Wheeles unable to vote due to limited meeting connectivity**

**Los Huertos aye**

**Chase aye**

**Gilless aye**

**The motion passed with one member unable to vote due to limited meeting connectivity.**

* Professional Foresters Examining Committee- Dan Stapleton, Licensing Officer
  + Licensing Officer Stapleton introduced a list of potential License Revocation due to non-payment of bi-annual license renewal for Board consideration.

**11-20-05 Chair Gilless moved to approve revocation of the applicable license for the licensees identified in the list provided for non-payment of license fees in accordance with the Professional Foresters Law. Member Wade seconded.**

**Roll Call:**

**Wade aye**

**Husari aye**

**Jani aye**

**Delbar aye**

**Wheeles unable to vote due to limited meeting c connectivity.**

**Los Huertos aye**

**Chase aye**

**Gilless aye**

**The motion passed with one member unable to vote due to limited meeting connectivity.**

* + An update on Professional Foresters Licensing Program and Fund condition, as well as the recent RPF and Certified Specialist Professional Examination was also provided by Mr. Stapleton.

**Report on the Joint Committee Workshop**.

Joint Committee Workshop – Committee Chairs provided updates on the discussions that were held on the following subjects during the Joint Committee meeting held on November 3, 2020.

* Update on Permanent Rulemaking for Fire Safe Regulations - 14 CCR 1270 *et seq*. – Molly Mowery, Wildfire Planning International
* Staff update on potential amendments to Conversions Exemptions - 14 CCR § 1104.1 *et al*.
* Discussion of development of a problem statement(s) regarding botanical resources and timber harvest processes

# Special Board Hearing and Reports

* **Presentation: Evaluation of Forest Road Scenarios Using Field Measurements and the Distributive Hydrology Soil Vegetation Model:** Dr. Chris Surfleet, Professor of Hydrology, Cal Poly State University, San Luis Obispo
* **Presentation: DRAFT Resolution 2020-3 for designation of a Zone of Infestation for Invasive Shot Hole Borers and Board consideration of expansion of designated Zone of Infestation for Goldspotted Oak Borer:** Rick Carr, Southern Region Staff Chief of Resource Management CAL FIRE and Kim Corella, Forest Pest Specialist, CAL FIRE.

**11-20-06 Member Gilless moved to adopt Resolution 2020-3 Declaring a Zone of Infestation for Invasive Shot Hole Borers.11-20-06 Member Gilless moved to adopt Resolution 2020-3 Declaring a Zone of Infestation for Invasive Shot Hole Borers. Member Wade seconded.**

**Roll Call:**

**Wade aye**

**Husari aye**

**Jani absent**

**Delbar aye**

**Wheeles unable to vote due to limited meeting connectivity.**

**Los Huertos aye**

**Chase aye**

**Gilless aye**

**The motion passed with one member absent and one member unable to vote due to limited meeting connectivity.**

**11-20-07 Chair Gilless moved to** **approve the Director’s Determination to Expand the Designated Zone of Infestation for the Goldspotted Oak Borer in accordance with the boundaries as set forth in Table 1 of the materials provided. Member Wade seconded.**

**Roll Call:**

**Wade aye**

**Husari aye**

**Jani absent**

**Delbar aye**

**Wheeles unable to vote due to limited meeting connectivity.**

**Los Huertos aye**

**Chase aye**

**Gilless aye**

**The motion passed with one member absent and one member unable to vote due to limited meeting connectivity.**

# CONCLUSION

## Public Forum

**Richard Gienger, Forests Forever,** provided information on various venues over recent years covering catastrophic conditions and climate crisis. Forests Forever is trying to focus on specific education for foresters being trained and practicing foresters to focus on how to grow larger trees and climate adaptive forests.

## Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,

ATTEST:

Signature of Matt Dias, Executive Officer

Matthew Dias

Executive Officer

Keith Gilless

Chair